CĒRA KINGS

OF THE

ŚANGAM PERIOD

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BY

K. G. SESHA AIYAR, B.A., B.L.

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BY

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To

His Highness Vañci Pāla
Śri Bāla Rāma Varma Kulaśēkhara,
Knight Grand Commander

Of The Most Eminent Order
Of The Indian Empire,

Mahārāja Of Travancore,
Who Worthily Represents

The Ancient And Historic House
Of Cēra Kings.

This Book
Is With His Highness's Gracious Permission
Respectfully Dedicated.

PREFACE.

Every student of South Indian history knows that of the three great Tamil kingdoms that flourished in ancient days in South India, the Cōḻa and Pāṇḍya kingdoms have long ago ceased to exist, while the Cēra kingdom still continues under the rule of its indigenous kings. Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri of the Madras University has in his scholarly works on the Cōḻas and the Pāṇḍyas given us the stories of those two royal houses, gathered from authentic sources; but as yet no intelligible account of the ancient Cēra kingdom based on reliable sources has been attempted. In the following pages, I have for the first time, tried to construct that story, so far as it can be recovered from ancient Tamil literature, which is the only available source from which it can be built up.

Tamil literature of the Śangam period is the oldest native source that supplies relevant material for ancient South Indian history; for it is antecedent to the era of dated inscriptions relating to South Indian kings. This important source has now been made available principally by the labours of the greatest living Tamil scholar, Mahāmahōpādhyāya Dr. V. Swaminatha Aiyar,—*clarum et venerabile nomen*—whose indefatigable energy and selfless work of nearly half-a-century have succeeded, not only in saving from the ravages of white ants almost

the whole range of the Śangam classics which had existed only in the form of fast-decaying palm-leaf manuscripts in remote corners of the southern peninsula, but also in bringing out critical editions of those priceless literary treasures. It is no exaggeration to say that it is impossible to repay the debt which the students of Tamil India owe to the venerable and learned Mahāmahōpādhyāya, by whose great work alone it has become possible to recover the outlines of the lost history of ancient South India, and to gain some knowledge of the state of civilization, the social, literary, and political life, and the religious ideas of the Tamil people in the early centuries of the Christian era.

Almost the first to recognise and demonstrate the supreme value of ancient Tamil literature in the construction of early South Indian history was my friend Dewan Bahadur Dr. S. Krishnaswamy Aiyangar, who worthily filled the chair of Ancient Indian History and Archaeology for many years in the Madras University, and by his numerous writings and his able direction of historical research in the post-graduate courses in the University has, as Sir Jadunath Sarkar, the well-known Indian historian, once said, founded the Madras School of Indian History. At a time when archaeology and epigraphy alone were regarded as supplying relevant material for purposes of history, he emphasised that for satisfactory historical

research, close study of ancient literature was also of prime importance; and by the systematic use in his works of material supplied by ancient Tamil classics, he successfully paved the way for succeeding workers in the field of ancient South Indian history. To-day Śangam literature is freely acknowledged by all to be an indispensable, and in some cases, the only source of historical information in regard to the early Tamil kingdoms.

The material for the present work has been entirely gathered from the Śangam works. One of them, *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* relates exclusively to the Cēras, and several other Śangam works are in some way or other connected with the Cēra kingdom and Cēra royalty. My object has been to draw as clearly as possible, from Śangam literature alone, the outlines of the story of the early Cēra kings and their achievements. Ancient South India had no Herodotus or Thucydides, Livy or Tacitus. Its literature, however, abounds in materials from which a careful student can build up a reliable story of the social and religious life of the people and their progress in arts, sciences and literature. *Patiṟṟup-pattu* gives a dynastic list of Cēra kings, with the length of the different reigns and the outstanding events of each reign; and though chronology as such is absent, and there is an entire absence of dated inscriptions, it is not impossible to construct a sort of chronological framework for the period with which

this book deals. I have attempted to construct such a framework; and though I do not claim for it absolute accuracy, I venture to think it will not be found unreasonable or wholly unacceptable.

The book has grown out of lectures originally delivered in Trivandrum and published in Indian historical journals ; and my thanks are due to the editors of those journals who readily agreed to the use of the articles for this book. It is my duty and it gives me pleasure to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mahāmahōpādhyāya Dr. V. Swaminatha Aiyar, the learned editor of the Śangam classics from which I have drawn my materials. To Mr. V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, M.A., Lecturer in Indian History in the University of Madras, I am particularly under obligation for his valuable suggestions and his untiring service in seeing the work through the press with scrupulous care. My sincere thanks are also due to Mr. T. V. Mahalingam, M.A., who gladly undertook the preparation of the Index and Bibliography.

TRIVANDRUM,
15*th January* 1937. } K. G. SESHA AIYAR.

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ABBREVIATIONS EMPLOYED AND THEIR EXPLANATION.

Agam	..	Aga-Nānūṟu
Ain	..	Ain-Kuṟu-Nūṟu
I.H.Q.	..	Indian Historical Quarterly
J.I.H.	..	Journal of Indian History
J.O.R.	..	Journal of Oriental Research
Kuṟun	..	Kuṟuntokai
Maṇi	..	Maṇimēkalai
Marutam	..	Kalit-tokai; Marutak-kali
Mullai	..	Mullaik-kali
Naṟ	..	Naṟṟinai
Neytal	..	Kalit-tokai; Neytal-Kali
Pālai	..	Kalit-tokai; Pālaik-Kali
P.p.	..	Patiṟṟup-pattu
Puṟam	..	Puṟa-Nānūṟu
Q.J.M.S.	..	Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society
Śilap.	..	Śilappadhikāram
Tol.	..	Tol-Kāppiyam

CHAPTER I.

S. 1. *Sources and Their Nature.*

The only source from which the story of the old Cēra Kingdom can be constructed is the literature of the Śangam period, for that story is unknown to epigraphy; but even Śangam literature can help us only to prepare an outline which at best can be treated merely as tentative in regard to the results that it may disclose. Of the Śangam works, the most important for the present purpose are *Puṛa-nānūṛu, Patiṛṛup-pattu,* and *Śilappadhikāram. Puṛa-nānūṛu* is a collection of 400 lyrics by different poets, numbering about 160; and the collection derives its name from the circumstance that the lyrics therein relate to *puṛam,* one of the two fundamental categories of poetic material according to the ancient rules of Tamil poetics and rhetoric. *Puṛam* or *Puṛap-porul* is concerned with the external relations of princes, which embrace war and politics. Though these are generally court lyrics, panegerizing in the main a king or a chieftain of the ancient Tamil land, they are usually direct and natural in language and sentiment and free from the exaggerated artificiality of later poetry; and most poems are by singers who are contemporaries of the personages sung about. One can easily see that for purposes of history, the lyrics of the *Puṛa-nānūṛu* collection must be of supreme value. *Patiṛṛup-pattu* is a collection of poems dealing exclusively with the wars and

other achievements, including those in the art of peace, of Cēra kings. As the name implies, there were ten poems, each consisting of a decad of lyrics; but of these, two have not till now been discovered—the first and the tenth. Each one of the existing eight decads deals with the achievements and merits of a separate Cēra king, and the author of each decad is a contemporary of the hero of his song. It is, therefore, obvious that for an account of the early Cēras, *Patiṟṟup-pattu* is of incalculable value. *Śilappadhikāram* is the first regular epic in the Tamil language, and it is indispensable for a knowledge of the early Cēra Kingdom, as its real hero is a Cēra monarch, Śen-Kuṭṭuvan, and its author a Cēra prince.

Besides, from *Aganānūṟu* and *Naṟṟiṇai* also, which are well-known Śangam collections of poems relating to *agam* or love, we derive some help in building up our story. I regard all these sources as of the nature of contemporary documents in respect of the kings of whom they speak. They are poetic accounts of the achievements of princes, who according to the conception of those early times were worthy of being extolled as high examples. The conception of biography as a faithful portrait of a man's life is entirely modern; but that circumstance cannot detract from the value of these poems as sources of authentic history; and I have unhesitatingly utilized them in constructing my narrative.

In this connection, it may be mentioned that the information supplied by the author of each *Patiṛṛup-pattu* is sometimes found amplified or augmented in the *Patigam* or epilogue appended to it; and there can be no doubt that the *Patigam* was added later by some one other than the author of the poem. So too, for a correct assessment of the historical value of the information conveyed by the lyrics of the *Puṟa-nānūṟu* collection, we have to rely on the colophons appended to them; and there is no means of knowing when and by whom these colophons were appended to the poems. There cannot, however, be any doubt about the antiquity of the *patigams* and the colophons; and it is rational to hold that their authors gave fixity to the ancient traditions of the Tamil country current in their day.

Tradition is really human testimony regarding the long past; and though like all human testimony it is liable to error, it should not on that account be discarded as wholly unworthy of attention, unless, indeed, we hold that in ancient times people were incapable of discriminating between truth and false-hood. Tradition is, in effect, reputation arising from the concurrence of many parties unconnected with each other, but all interested in investigating the subject; and in the absence of trustworthy first-hand evidence, tradition may and ought to be accepted as the ground-work for history, especially in matters where the

probability for personal bias is little. In this view, I see no reason to doubt the correctness of the information conveyed by the *patigams* and the colophons, and I have accepted the veracity of these very ancient documents which the Tamil world has never thought of questioning for long centuries, ever since they were written by persons who could have had no personal bias whatever.

S. 2. *Udiyan Cēralātan, the first Cēra King.*

The extant sections of *Patiṟṟup-pattu* deal with the achievements of eight Cēra kings, and they are:—

Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātan,
Pal-yānai Śel-Keḻu-Kuṭṭuvan,
Kaḷankāik-kaṇṇi-Nārmuḍic-Cēral,
Kaḍal-Piṟakōṭṭiya Śen-Kuṭṭuvan,
Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭuc-Cēralātan,
Śelvak-kaḍunkō-Vāḻiyātan,
Takaḍūr-erinta Perum-Cēral Irumpoṟai, and
Kuḍakkō Iḷam-Cēral-Irumpoṟai.

For the names of the Cēra kings celebrated in the *Puṟa-nānūṟu* lyrics, we have to depend on the colophon appended to each lyric of that collection. From the colophons, we gather the names of seventeen Cēra kings; and they are:—

Cēramān Peṟum-Śoṟṟu Udiyan Cēralātan,
Cēramān Karuvūr-ēṟiya Oḷvāḷ Kōp-perum-Cēral Irumpoṟai,
Cēramān Kaḍunko Vāḻiyātan,
Cēramān Pālaipāḍiya Perum Kaḍunkō,
Cēramān Antuvan Cēral Irumpoṟai,

Cēramān Yānaikkaṭ Śēy Māntaram-Cēral Irumporai.
Cēramān Kōk-Kōdai Mārban,
Cēramān Takadūrerinta Perum-Cēral Irumporai,
Cēramān Kuṭṭuvan Kōdai,
Cēramān Kuḍakkō Neḍum-Cēralātan,
Cēramān Perum-Cēralātan,
Cēramān Kaṇaikkāl Irumporai,
Cēramān Kuḍakkō Cēral-Irumporai,
Cēramān Kōṭṭambalattut-tuñciya Māk-kōdai,
Cēramān Vañcan,
Cēramān Kaḍalōṭṭiya Vēl-keḻu Kuṭṭuvan, and
Cēramān Mā-Ven Kō.

As we can see easily, some of these names are re-duplications. It will be my attempt in the following pages to arrange these Cēras in their chronological order, ascertain their approximate dates and show by what deeds or achievements their names live in literature. Perhaps in the discussion, it will be possible to relate these kings to one another and to get a glimpse of the social, religious and political life of the people in the Cēra country in those distant days.

For the earliest Cēra known to Tamil literature, we have to go to *Puṟanāṉūṟu.* He is Cēramān Perum-Śoṟṟu Udiyan Cēralātan, who is celebrated in song by Murañciyūr Muḍi-nāgarāyar in *Puṟam* 2. That lyric, which, if we except some possible references to him in *Aga-nāṉūṟu,* is the only poem sung in his honour, is given in translation below.

Hail, noble king! whose nature well combines
The qualities of all the elements;

Whose long forgiving suff'ring is a match
To mother earth's; whose judgment wise is wide
As all-pervading ether, and whose might
Like air illimitable, and like fire
Resistless, with refreshful mercy still
Is tempered, which thy glorious sway upholds,
As water cool enlivens nature's face.
Hail, warrior-king! Thy land with plenty smiles,
With untold wealth the deep sea's bosom yields,
And treasures new that ceaseless to thy ports
From foreign lands rich merchant vessels bring.
The sun, that in thy eastern sea is born,
In thy foam-crested western ocean seeks
His rest at eve. Sky bounds thy land alone!
Majestic monarch! When the ten times ten
Kauravas, crowned with golden *tumbai* wreaths,
Wrathful in battle 'gainst the heroes five—
Lords of the fiery steeds with tossing mane—
Their patrimony lusting after, fought,
Thou didst unstinted savoury food supply
To either host, till all the Kurus fell.
Illustrious king! though luscious milk may sour,
The sun his brilliance lose, and e'en the four
Vedas themselves their holy teachings change,
Mayst thou by ministers be served, whose love
For thee and wisdom in thy councils shall
Constant through all vicissitudes remain!
Mayst thou in power and glory steadfast shine
Throughout all time like Potiya's sacred mount
And golden-peaked Himalaya, where rest
The dainty headed fawn and large-eyed deer
Securely by the holy triple fire
Which for their ev'ning rites the sages raise!

In this translation, I have followed the ancient commentator of *Puṛa-nāṉūṟu,* who

makes out that this Cēra king was a contemporary of the Pāṇḍavās and the Kauravās, and in the great battle of Kurukṣētra, he supplied the rival armies with food. The *Śilappadhikāram* also seems to favour the view that there was a Cēra king who supplied food to the rival hosts at Kurukṣētra.[1] The words of the lyric need not, it seems to me, be taken to refer to him. Perhaps the king celebrated in this poem gave a memorial offering to the spirits at the anniversary of the Mahābhārata War, in which the heroes from whom he traced his descent, had died; and that is probably what the poet refers to. This seems to be supported by a lyric by Māmūlanār (*Agam* 233) where we read:

மறப்படைக்குதிரை மாறுமைந்திற்
றுறக்கமெய்திய தொய்யாநல்லிசை
முதியர்ப்பேணிய வுதியஞ்சேரல்
பெருஞ்சோறு கொடுத்தஞான்றை.

and Paṇḍit R. Raghava Iyengar of Rāmnād also seems to hold that view.[2]

Udiyan Cēral was obviously famous for his lavish hospitality; and his kitchen has become a bye-word for sumptuous feeding. Thus Kōṭṭambalattuñciya Cēramān has in *Agam* 168:

கொடைக்கடனென்றகோடா நெஞ்சினுதியனட்டில்போல.

This Cēramān who is stated to have died at Kōṭṭambalam is, perhaps, identical with

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1 *Śilap. Vālttuk-kādai-ūśalvari*, 1.

2 *Vide* Preface to Aganānūṛu—Rajagopala Aiyangar's Edition, p. 42. *Vide* also P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar's '*History of the Tamils*', p. 492.

Kōṭṭambalattut-tuñciya Māk-kōdai, the author of *Puṟam* 245, of whom we shall hear more, later on. He tells us in this lyric that Udiyan's royal kitchen was at Kuḻumūr, perhaps Ptolemy's Kourellour, a place, so far as I can see, situated possibly in North Travancore. I suggest that it is very probably the place now known as Kumuḻi, near the source of the Periyar river, in the Devikoḷam Division of Travancore. Kuḻumūr may, by metathesis, easily become Kumuḻi, just as Musiri, the seaport of the Cēra Kingdom so famous in Śangam literature, appears as Murasi in Sanskrit works. We cannot say whether Kuḻumūr was the original capital of the Cēras, taking for the present that Kuḻumūr is a proper noun denoting a place; possibly it was; but we can only say that Tamil tradition does not appear to have known a time when the Cēra capital was not Vañci. We see from *Aga-nānūṟu* that Udiyan Cēral extended his kingdom by his conquests. Māmūlanār refers to him in *Agam* 65 as:

நாடு கண்ணகற்றிய உதியன் சேரல்

that is, Udiyan Cēral who conquered others' territories and annexed them to his own.

In *Puṟam* 2, Udiyan Cēral is called Vānavaramban, and this term means 'one whose kingdom is bounded by the sky' or as explained in the *Cūḍāmaṇi Nighaṇḍu*, 'by the sea'. It has been suggested that, perhaps the form of the word was originally Vānavar-anban, which

reminds one of Aśoka's *Dēvānām-priya;* but it seems to me that the suggestion is far-fetched. Pāṇini explains *Dēvānām-priya* as meaning 'an obstinate fool'. It appears that in Vēdic and allied Sanskrit literature, *Dēvānām-priya* is employed as a term of reproach to denote a heretic.[3] For another liberty taken with the name of this Cēra king, some Malayalam scholars of to-day are responsible; for the grotesque transformation of the name *Vāna-Varamban* Udiyan Cēral into Udayan Bāna Varman is their leger-demain. *Vānavaramban* is a descriptive epithet, having reference to his extensive territory and conquests or his maritime kingdom. If, as we see from *Aga-nānūṟu,*[4] he was great in war, he was also great in the arts of peace. Trade and commerce flourished in the land and foreign merchantmen called at its ports. He was a munificent patron of letters, as we see from the same *Agam,* where we read:

உதியஞ்சேரல்
பாடிசென்ற பரிசிலர்போல
வுவவினிவாழி.

Udiyan Cēral may be regarded as the founder of the Cēra dynasty of the Śangam period. Having regard to the scheme of

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3 *Vide* Śri Śankaracharya's *Madras Discourses,* pp. 147—163. See also V. R. R. Dikshitar, *The Mauryan Polity,* p. 291 where reference is made to other kings bearing that title.

4 *Agam* 65.

arrangement adopted in *Patiṛṛup-pattu*, there can be no doubt that he was the hero of the first decad of that collection, which is now unfortunately missing; for we find from the *Patigam* of second *Patiṛṛup-pattu* that Udiyan Cēral was the father of Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātaṉ, the hero of that decad. From the same source we learn that Udiyan Cēral had married Nallini, the daughter of Veḷiyan Vēṉmān, afterwards known as Cōḻan Pōrvaikkō-Perunaṛkiḻḻi, whose father Tittan was, perhaps, the earliest of the Cōḻa kings who ruled at Uṛaiyūr. It is interesting to note that, among the names by which the Cēra is known, the *Nighaṇḍus* mention Udiyan and Vāna-varamban, the names that this king bore. It may be permissible to suggest that, perhaps, Udiyan-pērūr, the Diamper of the Christians, which is on the northern boundary line of Travancore, was founded by him.

S. 3. *Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātan.*

We may now follow the lead of *Patiṛṛup-pattu*. The hero of the second decad of that work is Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātan, the son of Udiyan Cēral by Veḷiyan's daughter Nallini. Imayavaramban was a great warrior, and he extended his kingdom to the north. He is said to have conquered seven kings and annexed their territories to his kingdom;[5] and he is praised as having set or imprinted his

5 *Patiṛṛup-pattu* 14.

bow on the slope of the Himalayas,[6] so that his prowess was known, in the words of his panegyrist, from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas. Among his successful wars were those against the 'Kaḍambu' clan.[7] The territory of the 'kaḍambu' clan, the clan that had the *Kaḍambu* (adina cordifolia) as its totem or guardian tree, is the territory of the Nannans, the 'gold producing Konkanam' of ancient Tamil literature;[8] and the Cēras seem to have had several wars with this tribe, which apparently was a source of harassment on the border. The description in *Patiṟṟup-pattu* 12 shows that Imayavaramban's victory over the Kaḍambas was an event of supreme importance; for the poet compares Imayavaramban's victory to that of the War-God Subrahmaṇya over Sūra-Padma.[9] It was obviously first among the outstanding events of his reign; for in references to him, prominent mention is frequently made to his victory over the Kaḍambas.[10] In *Patiṟṟup-pattu* 20 the poet propounds the question: "Do you ask me who is my king?" and gives the proud answer:—"He is the invincible Neḍum-Cēralātan who utterly destroyed the Kaḍambu". In praising

6 *Agam* 127.

7 *Patiṟṟup-pattu* 11, 12, 20; also *Agam* 127, 347.

8 *Naṟ*. 391; *Agam* 173.

9 *Patiṟṟup-pattu* 11.

10 *Ibid.*, 12 and 20.

the ancestry of Iḷam-Cēral Irumpoṛai, Perum-Kunṛūr Kiḻār acclaims him[11] as—

கடம்பின் முழுமுதறடிந்து பொருமுரணெய்திய பெரியோர் மருக.

Māmūlar in *Agam* 127, begins the narration of this Cēra's great achievements with his conquest of the Kaḍamba country:—

வலம்படுமுரசிற் சேரலாதன்
முந்நீரோட்டிக் கடம்பறுத் திமயத்து
முன்னோர் மருள வணங்குவிற்பொறித்து
நன்னகர் மாந்தை முற்றத்தொன்னார்
பணிதிறைதந்த பாடுசால்நன்கலம்.

It is difficult to say whether these Kaḍambas were the stock from which the **Banavasi** Kaḍambas came; perhaps they were. A view has gained ground among some scholars that the Kaḍambu clan were pirates,[12] and Ptolemy's phrase *Ariake andron peiraton* has at least in part been responsible for it. The latter words, as was pointed out by a recent writer may be regarded as a corruption of Andrabhṛtya; but I am inclined to think that the view therein expressed, that the Kaḍambas were not a piratical people at all, cannot be maintained, in view of the language of the opening lines of *Patiṛṛup-pattu* 11 and expressions like—

முந்நீரோட்டிக்கடம்பெறிந்து (*Agam* 127.)
மால்கடலோட்டிக்கடம்பறுத்து (*Agam* 347.)

that Māmūlar employs.

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11 *Patiṛṛup-pattu*, 87.

12 *Vide* Dr. Krishnaswami Aiyangar's ***Beginnings of South Indian History***, p. 232.

This Cēra is also said to have won a victory over the Yavanas. There is no means of knowing where exactly the colony of the Yavanas was or who exactly they were. The term *Yavana* has been taken to denote the Greeks; but I am not sure if it did not originally denote the Javanese or the Arabs;[13] and it is noteworthy that Ptolemy makes no mention of a Greek colony. The punishment meted out to the Yavanas by Imayavaramban is singular. Their arms are said to have been pinioned behind their back, and *ghī* poured on their head.

In *Agam* 127, Māmūlar also tells us of his conquest of Māntai which not improbably is the Mandagara of the *Periplus*.

Obviously the land of the Cēra was a rich and flourishing country. Among jewels worn in the land were those made of flashing gems set in gold.[14] Besides rice, meat was also used as food; and drinking palm wine was prevalent.[15] There was no limit to the bounty of this great Cēra who was as liberal as Akkūran himself, one of the reputed seven first *Vaḷḷals* of Tamil tradition. In the words of the poet:

மாரிபொய்க்குவதாயினுஞ்
சேரலாதன்பொய்யலனசையே ! [15 a]

13 For the latest discussion on the identification of the Yavanas, see *J.I.H.*, Vol. XIV, Pt. I.

14 *Patiṛṛu-pattu* 16.

15 & 15a *Ibid.*, 18.

"The rains may fail; but never the munificence of Cēralātan". And indeed, the poet may well be acquitted of exaggeration, when we remember that, according to the colophon, he was, for composing the second decad of *Patiṟṟup-pattu*, rewarded with the free gift of 500 villages in Umbark-kāḍu (literally elephant-forest), perhaps the region about the Anaimalai in North-West Travancore, and the revenue for thirty-eight years from the southern province of the kingdom. It is interesting to note that there is still, a house bearing the name of *Umbarkkāḍu-vīḍu* in Vaikam in North Travancore. He is praised as a man of his word; and his life was dedicated to acts of bounty and beneficence. Even in seasons of drought, he could not bear to see any one suffer from hunger.[16] He made rich donations and presents of jewels to temples; and he shone like Viṣṇu himself.[17] We learn that silk, diamond and gold ornaments were in use in the land.[18] He is said to have reigned for fifty-eight years. In regard to his name also, some Malayalam scholars have taken undue liberty and transformed Imayavaramban into Imaya Varman!

S. 4. *Pal-yānai Śel-Keḻu-Kuṭṭuvan.*

Next in order comes Pal-yānai Śel-Keḻu-Kuṭṭuvan, brother of Imayavaramban.[19]

16 *Patiṟṟup-pattu*, 20.
17 *Ibid.*, 15.
18 *Ibid.*, 12; *Agam*, 127.
19 *Ibid.*, III, *Patigam*.

His capital stood on the banks of the broad Periyār,[20] and near the sounding ocean.[21]. He was also a great warrior and made extensive conquests,[22] among which the conquest of Konkar-Nāḍu is specifically mentioned.[23] He was the lord of Pūḷi-Nāḍu and the Ceruppu-mountains[24] as well as of the Aiyirai-Malai—probably the same as Aiyitai-Malai in Central Travancore near the source of the Periyār—and the region of the Periyār which even in times of protracted drought, when the falls in the hills have gone dry, is rich in water![25] In the early years of his reign, he seems to have been a fierce warrior; and it is significant that out of the ten lyrics in *Patiṟṟup-pattu* III, as many as seven praise his irresistible prowess in war. He is eulogized as Kuṭṭuvan, "the ever victorious lord of vast armies and the protective armour of fierce-eyed warriors'.[26] The march of his army into the territories of his foes meant the utter devastation of those lands and their conversion into deserts infested by robbers.[27] But a great change came over the spirit of his dream in later years; and like

20 *Patiṟṟpu-pattu,* 28.

21 *Ibid.,* 21.

22 *Ibid.,* 23.

23 *Ibid.,* 22.

24 *Ibid.,* 21.

25 *Ibid.,* 28.

26 *Ibid.,* 21, 22 and 24.

27 *Ibid.,* 24, 25 and 26.

Aśoka after his war in Kalinga, Pal-yānai Śel-Keḷu-Kuṭṭuvan turned away from war and carnage, and came under the influence of the spirit. As a warrior he used to worship Korṟavai, to whom he made elaborate sacrifice when starting for war;[28] but afterwards he followed the law of the Brahmanas, who daily performed their six-fold functions,[29] and accepted Neḍumbāratāyanār as his preceptor. He helped the Brahmana poet Pālai Gautamanār, the author of *Patiṟṟup-pattu* III, to perform ten *Yāgas*.[30] He never swerved from his word, but kept straight on even like the sun.[31] He was a patron of letters, and all branches of learning, சொற் பெயர் நாட்டம் கேள்வி[31a] both religious and secular, throve in the land. His kingdom was so rich and prosperous, that his unstinted liberality did not affect in any manner the wealth of the country. He duly performed *Dēvayajña* and *Atithiyajña*,[32] and acquired merit and greatness, 'vaster in extent than even the five elements'[33] and apparently came to deserve the name of Dharmaputra.[34] After a reign of twenty-five

28 *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* 30.
29 *Ibid.,* 24.
30 *Patigam Patiṟṟup-pattu,* III.
31 *Patiṟṟup-pattu* 21.
31a *Ibid.,* 21.
32 *Ibid.,* 21.
33 *Ibid.,* 24.
34 *Puṟam* 366.

years he followed the example of his preceptor and became an anchoret, after dividing his kingdom among his kindred.[35]

S. 5. *Nārmuḍiccēral.*

Pal-yānai Śel-Keḻu Kuṭṭuvan was succeeded by Kaḷankāik-kaṇṇi Nārmuḍiccēral, son of Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātan. Nārmuḍic-cēral is the hero of the 4th decad of *Patiṟṟup-pattu* of which Kāppiyāṟṟu Kāppiya-nār is the author. Though he was a great warrior, he treated his enemies with great clemency and magnanimity; a circumstance that the author of IV *Patiṟṟup-pattu* particularly mentions with admiration:

வசையுநர்கறுத்த
பகைவர்தேஎத்தாயினுஞ்
சினவாயாகுத லிறும்பூதாற்பெரிதே

We shall be able to appreciate the full significance of this praise when we remember that in those early days the victors in the field of battle are said to have pulled out the teeth of their enemies, and exposed them to public view at the gates of their capital.[36] The most important of the expeditions of this Cēra were those against Neḍumiḍal or Añci,[37] and Nannan[38] both of whom he defeated in battle. Añci was perhaps a predecessor of Auvai's friend who is known in literature as Atiyamān

35 *Patiṟṟup-pattu* III, *Patigam.*
36 *Agam* 211; *Naṟ.* 18.
37 *Patiṟṟup-pattu* 32.
38 *Ibid.*, 40.

Neḍumān Añci; if so, he must have been an Atiyamān, and the chief of Kutiraimalai[39] with his head-quarters at Takaḍūr,[39a] now in Mysore. I suggest Atiyamān is the *Satiyaputra* of Aśoka's inscription. The initial *a* becomes *ha,* which again becomes *sa* in *prakrit;* and *mān* is abbreviation for *magan* which means *putra;* and thus Atiyamān becomes Satiya-putra on the analogy of Cēramān equals Kērala-putra. I know other identifications of Satiyaputra have been suggested; but so far as I remember, previous writers have, consciously or unconsciously, read the name in the Edict as *Satyaputra,* including even the latest writer on the subject, Mr. V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, who has contributed to the *Indian Culture*[39b] an article on "Who are Satyaputras"? The word is not Satyaputra but Sat*i*yaputra; and no attempt has been made before to explain the presence of *i* in the name. The identification here suggested of Atiyamān with Sat*i*yaputra satisfactorily accounts for the presence of the particle *i* in the name appearing in Aśoka's Edict. Atiyamān's territory will

39 *Agam* 32.

39a Some scholars identify this with Dharmapuri in Salem District.

39b Vol. I, Pt. III, Mr. Govinda Pai in his paper on *Satyaputra* in *Krishnasawmi Aiyangar Commemoration Volume* (pp. 33—47) gives the following involved equation: Śāntika (S. Kanara)=Sāntika=Sāmtika=Sātika=Sātiya=Satiya.

exactly occupy the place where, having regard to the order in which the principalities or kingdoms of South India are mentioned in Aśoka's Edict, Satiyaputra's territory may be expected to be situate. The Atiyamāns were an independent line of chiefs till they were subdued by the Cēra, whose vassal they ultimately became. Nannan, as has already been stated, was the chief of Pūḻi and the head of the Kaḍambu clan.[40] This Nannan appears to have recovered some of his lost territory; and Nārmuḍiccēral advanced against the insurgent chief and won a decisive victory over him at Vāgaipperunturai, wrested back the territory[41] and subjugated the clan. Nannan became thereafter a vassal or feudatory of the Cēra. Thus in *Agam* 258, Paraṇar refers to him as Nannan *Udiyan,* and in *Agam* 44 he is referred to as one of the feudatory generals of the Cēra. We may, therefore, hold that some time after the crushing defeat at Vāgaipperunturai, Nannan became the ally and supporter of the Cēra, whom he recognised as his overlord.

Nārmuḍiccēral was apparently an ideal monarch; and Kāppiyāṟṟu Kāppiyanār, who has sung the fourth decad of *Patiṟṟup-pattu* in his honour, tells us that the king lived for the good of others; the poet's words being பிறர்க்கென வாழ்தி நீயாகல்[42]. He freely gave away elephants as

40 *Vide* also *Patiṟṟup-patti* III *Patigam.*

41 *Agam* 119.

42 *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* 38; 39.

present.[43] Among the shrines in his kingdom, prominent mention is made of the shrine of கமழ்குரற்றுழாஅ யலங்கற் செல்வன்; and the old scholiast explains this to mean the deity in Tiruvananta-puram (*i.e.* Trivandrum).[44] This explanation is probably correct. In *Agam* 359, Māmūlar has வானவரம்பன் வெளியத்தன்ன which means 'like வெளியத்து of Vāna Varamban'. This would show that in Māmūlar's time Veḷiyattu or Veḷiyam was in the Cēra Kingdom. Veḷiyam is most probably the modern Viḷiñcam, a coast town some miles south of Trivandrum, where in later years a well-known naval battle was fought. Balita, which appears to be a corruption of Veḷiyattu, is said in the *Periplus* to be in the Cōḷa Kingdom; but that probably is a misdescription. We may, therefore, hold, in the state of our present knowledge, that in this Cēra's reign his kingdom embraced Trivandrum in the south, as the commentator indicates. This monarch is also called Vānavaramban,[45] possibly because in his reign had been attained the ideal of peace and safety graphically described in *Puṟam* 2, as having existed in the land in the days of Udiyan Cēral, the first to bear the title of Vānavaramban. He was, like his predecessors, a liberal patron of letters; and we learn from the colophon that the author of the fourth decad of *Patiṟṟup-pattu* was given forty lakhs

43 *Patiṟṟup-pattu*, 40.
44 *Ibid.*, 31.
45 *Ibid.*, 31.

of gold coins in appreciation of his poem. Nārmuḍiccēral reigned, according to the colophon, for twenty-five years.

S. 6. *Śen-Kuṭṭuvan.*

The next in order in the main line is Sen-Kuṭṭuvan, stated to be another son of Imayavaramban. Śen-Kuṭṭuvan's name is, perhaps the best known among the Cēra Kings to the ordinary student of Tamil literature. He is the hero of the fifth decad of *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* of which the author is Paraṇar, one of the greatest poets of the Śangam age. He is also the real hero of *Śilappadhikāram,* the well-known Tamil epic by the Cēra prince Iḷankō Aḍikaḷ, though there are some who, it seems to me, needlessly entertain doubts about it. He was a great warrior, and with his victorious army he is said to have conquered vast regions from Cape Comorin in the South to the Himalayas in the North "where the gods dwell":—

கடவுணிலையகல்லோங்குநெடுவரை
வடதிசையெல்லைஇமயமாகத்
தென்னங்குமரியொடாயிடையரசர்
முரசுடைப்பெருஞ்சமந்ததையவார்ப்பெழச்
சொல்பலநாட்டைத்தொல்கவினழித்த
போரடுதானைப்பொலந்தார்குட்டுவ [46]

He was always in front in the field of battle, leading his army; and his soldiers used shields made of tough bull-hide which effectively protected them from the darts of

46 *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* 43.

their enemies.[47] Early in his reign, there seem to have been disturbances on the borders of his kingdom, which had to be quelled. Among the chiefs that he subjugated was Mōgur-Mannan, a proud warrior well-known in ancient Tamil literature.[48] His name was Paḷaiyan, and his totem was the neem tree,[49] which shows he was a feudatory of the Pāṇḍya. One of the Cēra's principal allies was Arugai, an enemy of the Chief of Mōgur.[50] Paḷaiyan went to war against Arugai, who sought Śen-Kuṭṭuvan's help; and in that war the lord of Mōgur, though he was assisted by other reigning princes and chieftains, was utterly defeated by the great Cēra.[51] Śen-Kuṭṭuvan also waged a successful war against the Kongar.[52] He won a great naval victory[53] by reason of which there came to be attached to his name the distinctive great naval victory[53] by reason of which there epithet Kaḍal-Piṟakkōṭṭiya,[54] which means, 'who destroyed the efficacy of the sea as a refuge'. It was apparently one of the most decisive naval victories in Cēra history,[55] and Śen-Kuṭṭuvan falsified by that achievement the

47 *Patiṟṟup-pattu*, 45.
48 *Ibid.*, 44 and 49.
49 *Ibid.*, 49; V *Patigam* and *Śilap.* XXVIII, 124-6.
50 *Ibid.*, 44.
51 *Ibid.*, 49.
52 *Śilap.* XXV, 152-5.
53 *Patiṟṟup-pattu* 45, 46, 48; *Agam* 212.
54 *Ibid.*, V *Patigam.*
55 *Ibid.*, 45.

popular belief that an island enemy was unassailable and invincible.[56] I consider that it was by this naval victory that Muśiri was made a safe port of call ; for we know that in Pliny's days, (*c.* 80 A.C.) pirates were a constant source of danger in those waters, and in Kuṭṭuvan's days *Yavana* ships called in large numbers at the port of Muśiri and in exchange for gold took back with them cargoes of pepper and other products.[57] The irreppressible Nannan again rose in revolt; but Śen-Kuṭṭuvan put down the disturbance and destroyed Viyalūr, one of Nannan's strongholds,[58] and Koḍukūr, possibly another of Nannan's strongholds.[59] According to *Śilappadhikāram,* Nannan was helped in this war by the Cōḷa and the Pāṇḍya.[60] As trophy of his success against the kings and chieftains he had vanquished, he wore on his breast as a personal ornament the crest jewels of seven ruling princes.[61]

After the destruction of Viyalūr, Śen-Kuṭṭuvan turned his attention to the Cōḷa country where a war of succession had broken out after the death of Karikāla. We find that nine princes contested the right of Perum-Kiḷḷi afterwards

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56 *Patirṟup-pattu,* 45.
57 *Agam,* 149.
58 *Patirṟup-pattu,* V *Patigam* and *Agam,* 97.
59 *Ibid.,* V *Patigam.*
60 *Śilap.,* XXV, 153-5.
61 *Patirṟup-pattu,* 45 and *Śilap.,* XXVIII, 169.

known as Nalam-Kiḷḷi Śēt-Cenni, the lawful claimant, who is said to be the brother-in-law of Śen-Kuṭṭuvan. Śen-Kuṭṭuvan went to his help, defeated his rivals at Nērivāyil, and placed him securely on the throne.[62] We also learn that this Cēra undertook an expedition to North India for consigning the remains of his deceased mother to the holy waters of the Ganges,[63] when he met Aryan princes in battle and defeated them. Later too, he led an expedition to the Gangetic region for fetching suitable stone from that hallowed ground for the effigy of Kaṇṇaki, the apotheosised wife or Pattini-Kaḍavuḷ, which he intended to consecrate in a temple that he proposed to build. He had received a request from his friend the Śātakarni for assistance, and he took advantage of it. The story of this northern march is not found in *Patiṟṟup-pattu*. It must have taken place some time after Paraṇar's poem had been composed and possibly after Paraṇar's death. It is, however found in *Śilappadhikāram;* and I see no reason to reject it. I have shown elsewhere that there is no historical improbability in it;[64] and the learned writer on Ancient India in the Cambridge *Shorter History of India* states there

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62 *Patiṟṟup-pattu*, V *Patigam* and *Śilap.*, XXVIII, ll. 115-19 also XXVII, ll. 118 ff.

63 *Śilap.*, XXV, 160 ff.

64 *Vide* my article '*A Problem of Ancient South Indian History*' in III, *J.I.H.* pp. 648 ff., also Chap. VII, S. 5 *infra.*

is probably a substratum of fact in the account of Śen-Kuṭṭuvan's expedition to the north.[65] Reading that epic and Paraṇar's fifth decad of *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* we can easily see that Śen-Kuṭṭuvan was pre-eminently a warrior, who always sought fresh conquests. *Patiṟṟup-pattu* 50 tells us that he spent long nights in thinking out plans for successful campaigns. We learn from *Śilappadhikāram* that for fifty out of the fifty-five years of his reign, he was engaged in gaining the laurels of war.[66] He was the most powerful monarch of his day in the South, and his might was such that he could domineer over the Cōḷa and the Pāṇḍya. This will be patent from the fact that the insignia that his royal decrees bore, consisted of the bow, the fish, and the tiger.[67]

In spite of his constant wars, his internal administration of the country left nothing to be desired. He was a great patron of arts and letters,[68] and he was so lavish that even the treasures he had brought from his naval victory he bestowed on bards and singers without strict regard to merit; so indiscriminate was he in his bounty. He was probably partial to *Kūttu* or dancing and the drama which he patronised very liberally;[69] and we read in

65 *Shorter History,* p. 174.
66 *Śilap.,* XXVIII, 129-32.
67 *Śilap.,* XXV, 171. 2; 87-90; XXVI, 168 ff.
68 *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* 49.
69 *Ibid.,* 42.

Śilappadhikāram that on his return from his eventful expedition to the North, a Śākkaiyan of Paravūr, a town in North Travancore, well versed in the art of *Kūttu,* entertained him and the queen by reciting with appropriate action the story of Tṛpura-Samhāra.[70] He is said to have made a free gift of the revenue derived from Umbarkkāḍu to Paraṇar in appreciation of the fifth decad of *Patiṛṛup-pattu.* He did much to develop trade and commerce; and at his ports, foreign merchantmen called and carried on brisk business. We read that large and beautiful ships of the Yavanas brought gold in great quantity to the port of Muśiri and went back laden with pepper, and that Kuṭṭuvan distributed as presents the rare products of the sea and the mountain.[71] His was a rich country, with a never failing supply of water. The Periyār, the principal river of the Cēra country, is described as full even in seasons of drought,[72] and the people that it attracted for bath are stated to be 'innumerable like the sands of the beach'.[73] In luxuriance, the land was even as rich as the country 'watered not only by the Kāvēri but by the accumulated waters of Mukkūḍal'[74] or the confluent waters of three

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70 *Śilap.,* XXVIII, ll. 76-7.

71 *Agam,* 149; and *Puṛam,* 343.

72 *Patiṛṛup-pattu* 43.

73 *Ibid.,* 48.

74 *Ibid.,* 50.

rivers. Toddy was freely consumed in large measure.[75] In hot weather, he used to camp in shady forests;[76] and we find from *Śilappadhikāram* that it was when he was so camping on one occasion that he received news of Kaṇṇaki's death from hillmen who had witnessed it. A detailed and informing account of Cēran Śen-Kuṭṭuvan is supplied by Pandit M. Raghava Iyengar in his learned monograph on that monarch.[77] This great Cēra King reigned for 55 years; and in his kingdom Hindus, Jains and Buddhists lived together in perfect amity. His consecration of a temple to Pattini-Dēvi was an event of international significance; and among those who attended the function was King Gaja-Bāhu of Ceylon. Probably this event contributed much to the spread of Bhagavati worship, now so common on the Malabar coast.

S. 7. *Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭuc-Cēralātan.*

Next in order to Śen-Kuṭṭuvan, *Patiṟṟup-pattu* deals with Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭuc-Cēralātan, alleged to be another son of Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātan and brother of Nārmuḍic-cēral. He is the hero of the sixth decad of *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* the author of which is Kākkai-pāḍiniyār Naccel̤l̤aiyār. The prefix

75 *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* 43. Vide *Puṟam,* 316 for a poem in praise of toddy.

76 *Ibid.*, 48.

77 The book has run to a Third Edition.

Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu to his name Cēralātan is apparently explained by the statements in *Patiṟṟup-pattu* 56 and 57 that he used in the flush of victory to dance with sword held high in the field of battle.[78] The *Patigam* to this decad gives another explanation, namely that he recovered a herd of cattle, lifted probably as a prelude to war by a neighbouring hostile chieftain. We know that in early days cattle-lifting was a common method of inaugurating hostile operations in war.[79] Or perhaps, ஆடு here only means வென்றி or victory, as it often does in Śangam literature. Naccel̤l̤aiyār does not mention any particular battle that this Cēra fought; but her poem enables us to see that he must have been a great warrior, as he is described as பெருஞ்சினப் புயலேறனையை and கூற்றம் வலை விரித்தன்ன நோக்கலை செருவகத்து[80].
Trade and commerce on a large scale flourished in the country. She mentions that valuable commodities brought into this Cēralātan's port were stored in godowns.[81] There were so few needy people in his city of ancient fame situated on the sea shore, that the king used to send vehicles to other places to bring men that he might bestow gifts

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78 *Cf.* வாளுயர்த்து போர்களத்தாடும் கோ
(*Patiṟṟup-pattu,* 56, ll. 4, 8).

79 *Agam,* 372. See also Dikshitar's *Studies in Tamil Literature and History,* pp. 229-30.

80 *Patiṟṟup-pattu* 51.

81 *Ibid.,* 55. நன்கலவெறுக்கை துஞ்சும்பந்தர்

on them.[82] Music and dancing were encouraged by him[83] and were richly rewarded. Many feudatory chiefs owed him allegiance.[84] His kingdom extended beyond the port of Naṟavu,[85] probably the Naoura of the *Periplus* or the Nitria of Pliny, which has been identified by Yule and others with Mangalore at the mouth of the river Nētravati. This is the first mention we have of Naṟavu in connection with the Cēras; and we may not unreasonably hold that Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu Cēralātan captured this sea-coast town. Perhaps, it is to this event that Veḷḷi-vītiyār alludes when she writes in *Agam* 45—

> கடல்கால்கிளர்ந்த வென்றிநல்வேல்
> வானவரம்பன்.

She must have been proximate in date to Auvai who refers to her domestic history and, therefore, proximate also to Rājasūyam-Vēṭṭa Peru-Naṟ-Kiḷḷi and Cēramān Mākkōdai, and must have lived after Karikāla Cōḷa, as she pathetically exclaims that her fate should not be similar to that of Ādi-Manti, an alleged daughter of that Cōḷa; and during this period, no Cēra answers to the name or title Vānavaramban except Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu Cēralātan.

From *Puṟam* 65 and 66 and *Agam* 55 we gather that the Cōḷa Karikāl Vaḷavan won a battle at Veṇṇi, and the name of his opponent

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82 *Ibid.*, 55.
83 *Patiṟṟup-pattu*, 57, 58 and 60.
84 *Ibid.*, 58, IV *Patigam*.
85 *Ibid.*, 60.

in that battle appears as Cēramān Perum-Cēralātan in the colophon; and in a foot-note we are told that another reading of the name is Perum-Tōḷātan. In *Agam* 55 he is called only Cēralātan. The identification of the Cōḷa and the Cēra mentioned in these poems has caused me much anxious thought; and though I once held otherwise, I now hold that the probabilities are that Karikālan is the well-known Cōḷa emperor, the son of Uruva-pahrer Iḷam-Śeṭ-Cenni and the hero of *Porunar-āṟṟu-paḍai* and *Paṭṭinap-pālai*, and the Cēra, Perum-Cēralātan is Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu Cēralātan. There is no doubt that the great Karikāla did win a famous battle at Veṇṇi, in which the Cēra, the Pāṇḍya and the Vēḷir chieftains were defeated.[86] *Agam* 246 is by Paraṇar, who has also sung of Uruva-pahrer Iḷam-Śeṭ-Cenni[87] and Śen-Kuṭṭuvan,[88] and the former was the father and the latter a contemporary and relation of Karikālā. I see no compelling necessity to postulate two Karikālas, each of whom won a battle at Veṇṇi against a Cēra. The Cēralātan that fell at the battle of Veṇṇi, where the great Karikāla won a signal victory, must have been proximate in date to Kuṭṭuvan; and Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu Cēralātan alone satisfies the test. If we be guided by *Kalingattuparaṇi*, Karikāla's victory at Veṇṇi must have been one of his late achievements; for

86 *Porunar*, ll. 143-48; *Agam* 246.
87 *Puram* 4.
88 *Patiṟṟup-pattu* V; *Puram* 369.

it was after his return from his northern expedition that he engaged the Cēra and the Pāṇḍya in battle and defeated them.[89] Probably these two kings and the neighbouring chiefs took advantage of Karikāla's absence from his territory in northern India, and attempted to portion out his kingdom among themselves; and hence the great battle of Veṇṇi that Karikāla fought against the confederate kings and chiefs. I am inclined to hold, therefore, that Āḍukōṭpāṭṭu Cēralātan met with his death at the battle of Veṇṇi. Perhaps *Patiṟṟup-pattu* 58, ll. 10-12 will afford some explanation for the alternative name Perum-Tōlātan.

The battle of Veṇṇi is of special interest, as *Puṟam* 65 and 66 mention a peculiar practice among famous warriors in those early days. We are told that the Cēra king while facing his foe in battle was pierced by a shaft which ran through his body, wounding also his back; and as a wound on the back was regarded as a blot on heroism, the Cēra sat facing north and courted death by starvation. Starvation unto death as a penance has always been regarded in India, especially in ancient times, as an act of supreme fortitude and merit; and by this act the Cēra wiped out the humiliation that the wound on the back implied. *Agam* 55 shows that the act evoked the sympathy and admiration of several people who also gave up their

89 *Kalinga.* 183.

life along with him; and brilliant as his victory was, Karikāla seems to have felt that the heroism of the vanquished Cēra's self-immolation surpassed his own as the victor of the day, and he had to be consoled with the assurance that the Cēra king was not greater than he in glory.[90]

Naccel̤l̤aiyār was richly rewarded with gold for jewels by Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu Cēralātan, and he further took her to himself. He is stated to have reigned for thirty-eight years.

90 *Puṛam* 66.

CHAPTER II.

S. 1. *Karuvūr-Ēṛiya Kō-perum-cēral Irumpoṛai.*

At this stage a digression into *Puṛa-nānūṛu* appears necessary. The Cēra Kings we have considered so far are, according to *Patiṛṛup-pattu,* descendants of Cēramān Perum-Cōṛṛu Udiyan Cēralātan. The remaining Cēra kings sung about in that work belong to another line of which the ancestor it is impossible to determine from that work. Before, however, taking up the consideration of the kings of that line celebrated in *Patiṛṛup-pattu,* it is at this stage necessary, it seems to me, to speak of a Cēra ruler who is not mentioned in *Patiṛṛup-pattu.* It will have been seen from the foregoing account that there was a vigorous expansion of the Cēra kingdom under the early Cēras. The work of conquest of the neighbouring territories and their annexation to the Cēra kingdom which began with Udiyan Cēralātan, the first Cēra king known to Tamil literature, was steadily continued in the reigns of his two sons Imayavaramban and Pal-yānai Śelkeḻu-Kuṭṭuvan. The last of these kings completed the conquest of Pūḻi-Nāḍu or Konkānam, the territory of the Nannans, who as ancient Tamil literature shows, were war-like chiefs who rarely missed an opportunity to harass their neighbours. He had also annexed the land of the Kongar which in those early times was the

theatre of endless warfare among the three Tamil kings. Round about that region were numerous war-like tribes. In the circumstances, the Cēra, after the conquest and annexation of these northern regions, would as a measure of political wisdom and necessity, have thought of strengthening his position by establishing a viceroyalty in the north; and I suggest that Pal-yānai Śelkeḻu-Kuṭṭuvan, conqueror of Pūḻi-Nāḍu and Kongu-Nāḍu appointed the first viceroy investing him with palatine powers, and sent him to the newly acquired northern province.

This consideration induces me to bring in here as contemporary of Pal-yānai Śelkeḻu-Kuṭṭuvan, a Cēra king who, so far as the materials now available go, appears to stand unrelated to any other Cēra known to literature. He is Cēramān Karuvūr-ēṟiya Oḷvāḷ-Kōperum-Cēral Irumpoṟai. This name occurs in the colophon to one single poem alone[1] which is by a poet, Narivērūttalaiyār, who does not appear to have sung about any other king or chieftain. It is not possible, therefore, to state from literature alone where exactly this Cēra king should be placed. We shall find presently that there was a line of Cēras who bore the name of Irumpoṟai; and in my view, the Cēral Irumpoṟais who figure in Tamil literature, represented, perhaps a junior branch of the

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1 *Puṟam* 5.

Cēra dynasty and were in the position of Cēra viceroys with palatine powers stationed in the North Cēra country with head-quarters at Toṇḍi, after the Cēra Kingdom had extended northward. Oḷvāḷ - Kō - Perum - Cēral Irumporai may be regarded as the first of these viceroys of the north, as he is said in the colophon to *have gone to reign at Karuvūr.*[1a] I take this Karuvūr to be different from Vañci, which according to me is Tiruvañcikaḷam; and I tentatively hold that Oḷvāḷ-Kō-Perum-Cēral Irumporai, as the first king of the branch, may be placed before Cēramān Antuvan Cēral Irumporai, mentioned in *Patigam* of *Patirrup-pattu* VII. We have no information about Oḷvāḷ Kō-Perum Cēral Irumporai except what is contained in *Puram* 5. He was apparently a great warrior, as the epithet *Oḷvāḷ* (bright sword) implies. It is easy to gather from *Puram* 5 that his lust for war and carnage was almost insatiable; and the poet gives him a timely admonition to turn to the prime duty of protection of his subjects. The poem may be rendered as follows:—

Lord of the forest region where, like herds
Of cattle, roam, among the huge black rocks
Resembling buffaloes, wild elephants!
Permit me—thou art great!—submit a word.
Detach thyself from those devoid of love
And mercy; they indeed, are marked for hell!
Be thou like parents who their children tend!
Protect thy land and people; 'tis worth-while!

1a *Puram* 5.

S. 2. *Antuvan Cēral.*

We may now pursue the study of the other decads of *Patiṟṟup-pattu.* The *Patigam* to the seventh decad of *Patiṟṟup-pattu* tells us that the hero of that decad was the son of Antuvan. His full name is Cēramān Antuvan Cēral Irumpoṟai.[2] There is a complete lack of materials about the activities of this Cēra. We can, however, say from the occurrence of Irumpoṟai in his name that he belonged to the northern line that began with Karuvūr-ēṟiya Perum-Cēral Irumpoṟai. I hold that Antuvan Cēral was, perhaps, the son and successor of Karuvūr-eṟiya Perum-Cēral. The only incident connected with him of which we can be reasonably certain, is gathered from the colophon to *Puṟam* 13, sung by Uṟaiyūr Ēṇiccēri Muḍa-Mōsiyār. We read that, by misadventure, the Cōḻa, Muḍittalai Kō-Perunaṟkiḻḻi, entered the precincts of Karuvūr, which then belonged to the Cēra, on a rutted elephant; and the poet in this poem tries to dissuade Antuvan Cēral from falling into the mistake of regarding the entry as an act of hostility on the part of the Cōḻa King. This was a period when in the land of the Cōḻas, rival chiefs or clans, the Cennis and the Kiḻḻis, were striving to extend their territory with a view to gain supremacy over the whole Cōḻa Kingdom. Sometimes as a diversion from their internal feuds and fights, a Cenni

2 *Puṟam* 13.

now or a Kiḷḷi at another time led a raid into the neighbouring Cēra Kingdom; and Antuvan Cēral had, therefore, good reason for his mistake, if mistake it really was.

However, another predatory invasion of the Cēra territory seems to have been led by Neytalankānal Iḷam-Śeṭ-Cenni, probably a contemporary in the Cenni line of Muḍittalai Perunaṛ-Kiḷḷi. We cannot affirm whether this Cenni was the same as Uruvapahrer Iḷam-Śeṭ-Cenni or was different from him; probably they were the same. The invading Cenni succeeded in capturing Pamalūr, which belonged to the Cēra;[3] and this act of war naturally led to retaliation by the Cēra who advanced into the territory of the Cōḻa. The Cēra and the Cōḻa met in battle at Pōr,[4] a place in the Cōḻa territory in the basin of the Kāvēri;[5] and both the royal combatants met with their death in that battle.[6] These two kings are said in the colophon to have been Cēramān Kuḍakko Neḍum-Cēralātan and Cōḻan Velpahradakkai Peru-Viraṛ-Kiḷḷi, who had an *alias* Peruṇaṛ-Kiḷḷi. Possibly Velpahradakkai Perunaṛ-Kiḷḷi and Muḍittalai Perunaṛ-Kiḷḷi are the same; and the Cēra may be taken to be Antuvan Cēral, who was undoubtedly a contemporary of that Cōḻa. In this view, we may hold that Antuvan Cēral

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3 *Puṛam* 203.

4 *Ibid.*, 62; 63.

5 *Agam* 186; 326.

6 *Puṛam* 62; 63.

also went by the name of Neḍum-Cēralātan at least in the latter part of his reign. We do not know how long his reign lasted.

S. 3. *Śelvak-kaḍunkō-vāḻiyātan.*

The next king we read of is his son, Śelvak-Kaḍunkō-vāḻiyātan, the hero of the seventh decad of *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* which was sung by Kapilar, one of the greatest of the Śangam poets. It is recorded that this king won a victory over the combined armies of the Cōḻa and the Pāṇḍya;[7] and he was in such plentitude of power, that soon he had no enemy anywhere.[8] His country was very prosperous; and there was pearl fishery in his sea ports.[9] Kapilar went to his court after the demise of Pāri, whose name has come to be a by-word in Tamil literature to denote a most munificent patron of literature and art. What Maccenas was to Virgil and Horace, that Pāri was to Kapilar, who was his staunch and faithful friend and admirer. Kapilar says this Cēra King rivalled Pāri in munificence;[10] and his bountifulness, says Paraṇar, became a by-word.[11] The poet exultantly exclaims: "There are many kings; but what benefit do we derive from them? If bards appear even on the outskirts of your capital

7 *Patiṟṟup-pattu* 63; also 85.
8 *Ibid.,* 69.
9 *Ibid.,* 67.
10 *Ibid.,* 61.
11 *Agam* 142.

city, it is your command they should be liberally rewarded, and they should not be put to the trouble of even seeing you. You shower ambrosia even more profusely than the clouds pour down rain.[12] Whatever may happen, your word remains unshakeable. Foes who have won renown in battle with others, gladly bow to you, regarding it as a privilege; and your benign love and generosity to them are unlimited."[13] He held Brahmanas in great respect.[14] The *Patigam* tells us that at the close of a *Yāga* he dedicated, as a gift, Okantur, a village, to Viṣṇu, the deity he worshipped. He rewarded Kapilar beyond the dreams of avarice. We are told that the poet was given 100,000 gold pieces or coins, and all the land that one could see from the top of a hill. Apparently this gift of land is not a myth; for we find Perum-Kuṇṟūr-Kiḻār, another Śangam poet, exlaims[14a] நல்லிசைக் கபிலன்பெற்ற ஊரினும் பலவே! which means, 'more numerous than the villages that the renowned poet Kapilar obtained'.

Śelva-Kaḍun Kō was almost an idol of the poets. Besides the VII decad of *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* Kapilar has also sung two lyrics in *Puṟa-nānūṟu* about this Cēra.[15] In *Puṟam* 8 the king is extolled as transcending the sun and the moon

12 *Patiṟṟup-pattu* 64.
13 *Ibid.,* 63.
14 *Ibid.,* 63, 1.1.
14a *Patiṟṟup-pattu* 85.
15 *Puṟam* 8; 14.

in glory; and thus inferentially we are told that he is greater than the Cōḷa and the Pāṇḍya, who are regarded as descended from the Sun and the Moon respectively, and that they owned his supremacy. I give below a translation of the poem:—

The Cēralātan of victorious arms,
Though small his kingdom, yet in prowess stands
Without a rival 'mong the ruling kings
Who his supremacy dare not contest!
In his munificence he stands alone!
Canst thou, O Sun! with that great king compare?
E'en though thou hast the wide expanse of heaven,
Thou shinest but by day! Thou turnest back
And dost conceal thyself before the moon!
Canst thou, O Moon! whose light streams down at night?
Thou art too fitful! Thou dost often change
And close behind the mountain safety seek!

Puṛam 14 is also interesting, as throwing light on the might, greatness and geniality of this Cēra. The king seems to have made a playful remark about the softness of the poet's hand; and then the poet sang the following praise of the monarch:—

Thy hands, O King! that to thy knees extend,
Control with well-shaped iron goad in time
Thy fierce-eyed elephant that breaks with ease
Fortified gates, with tough wood bolted fast,
And rein thy rushing charger that can clear
Deep trenches filled with water. Seated high
In thy war-chariot, from thy quiver slung
O'er thy broad back, thou dost with forceful skill
Rain darts on foes and so thy hands are scaled,
Which on the poets presents rich bestow!

Like Muruga thou shinest, gracious king!
Thy chest, as tough and broad as earth itself,
Though threatening to thy foes, fills womankind
With pain of love insatiate. Thy hands
With constant kingly acts are firm and strong,
While we, thy bards, who thriving on thy gifts
Employ our hands in doing nothing else
Than eating meat well seasoned in sweet smoke,
Or rice with condiments and curry mixed,
Have hands that are effiminate and soft!

Paraṇar too has sung about the unparalleled liberality of this Cēra in *Agam* 142, in language that reminds us of Māmūlanār's praise of Udiyan Cēral's bounty in *Agam* 65. He writes: 'Rejoice, O heart! like the suppliants who return from the court of Kaḍunkō, laden with largesse'. The king is there called Māntaran Poṟaiyan Kaḍunkō; and perhaps it is to the same king that reference is made in *Agam* 62 as Poṟaiyan, in *Agam* 303 as Paśum-pūṭ-Poṟaiyan and in *Kuṟuntogai* 89 as Perumpūṭ-Pōṟaiyan. Śelvak-Kaḍundō-vāḷiyātan reigned for twenty-five years and died at Cikkarp-paḷḷi.[16] We learn from *Patiṟṟup-pattu* 67 that his territory included Koḍumaṇam, probably the modern Koḷumam near Coimbatore.

S. 4. *Perum-Cēral Irumpoṟai.*

He was succeeded by his son, Perum-Cēral Irumpoṟai, a great warrior in whose praise Ariśil Kiḷār has sung the eighth decad of *Patiṟṟup-pattu*. He defeated Kaḷuval, the

16 *Puṟam* 387.

Iḍayar chief,[17] and won a great victory at Takaḍūr in Kollikkūṟṟam against Atiyamān Eḻini and two great kings.

கொல்லிக்கூற்றத்து
பல்வேற்றானை அதிகமானோ
டிருபெருவேந்தரையுமுடனிலைவென்று [17a]

It is said that his conquest of Takaḍur has been celebrated in an old Tamil work *Takaḍur Yāttirai,* now missing. His fame as a hero spread so rapidly that soon princes and chiefs and others bowed to him in submission;[18] and he spared the lives of his foes when they submitted to him and paid him tribute, 'even as spirits spare their victims when sacrifice is offered to them.[18a] His sway and power extended so far that he was not only the lord of Kolli and 'the protecting armour' of the people of Pūḻi-Nāḍu, but he was even regarded as the lord of Pugār.—

காவிரிமண்டியசேய்விரிவனப்பிற்புகாஅர்செல்வ [18b]

His ministers were men of wisdom who made the good of the people their chief concern.[19] Both inland and sea-borne trade flourished in the land.[20] The king performed *Yāgas* in accordance with the rules laid down,[21] and the

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17 *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* 71.
17a *Ibid.,* 78, VIII *Patigam* and *Puṟam,* 230.
18 *Ibid.,* 75.
18a *Ibid.,* 71.
18b *Ibid.,* 73.
19 *Ibid.,* 72.
20 *Ibid.,* 76.
21 *Ibid.,* 74.

whole country was rich and prosperous.[22] He was a great patron of learning; and the respect and regard with which he treated bards that sought him are exemplified by a supremely lovable act of high-souled magnanimity recorded in *Puṛam* 50 by Mōśu Kīranār. The poet's art yielded him in those days high praise and rich gifts, and made him a welcome guest in every court. Mōśu Kīranār, when he arrived at the court of this great Cēra King, found the latter had gone out for a hunt; and the bard, who was tired, fell asleep by mistake on the couch intended for the king's drum. The king discovered the poet sleeping; and with a greatness and nobility of heart that was beyond all praise, he not only did not disturb him but kept fanning him till he awoke refreshed! King and hero as he was, Perum-Cēral found light and life in the immortal song of the poet, whom he held in the greatest esteem. The colophon says that as reward he offered to Ariśil Kiḻār, the author of the eighth decad of *Patiṛṛup-pattu,* even his very throne, and everything of value in the palace, which the poet, wisely declined to accept; and the king thereupon made Ariśil Kiḻār his minister. This king reigned for seventeen years. It is interesting to note that this king is addressed as *Kōḏai Māṟba*[23] which means: he who holds Lakṣmi in his breast. It

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22 *Patiṛṛup-pattu,* 71.
23 *Ibid.,* 79.

must be after him that a subsequent Cēra came to bear that name.

S. 5. *Iḷam-Cēral Irumpoṟai.*

He was succeeded by his son Iḷam-Cēral Irumpoṟai, the hero of the ninth decad of *Patiṟṟup-pattu* of which the author is Perum-Kunṟūr Kiḻār. This poet had met with bitter disappointment once when he sought this Cēra's bounty.[24] I give *Puṟam* 210.—

Forgetting thy high duty to protect
Mankind, thou seest with eyes devoid of love
And helpful charity thy suppliants.
If other kings unsympathetic prove
Like thee, it would be best if men like me
Were never born! My pure and blameless wife
Devoted unto me, if there be left
Breath in her body, will be thinking still
Of me. Afraid am I if even now
Unjust and coward Death hath snatched her off!
I hasten home this instant her to save.
She hath, unable her distress to bear,
Been wishing oft in dire despair for death!
Live long, O King! Behold! Weighed down in heart,
I hence depart and carry back with me
My indigence, as helpless as the forts
Of foes that cannot stand 'gainst thy attack!

Later, the king and the poet understood each other, and the poet says: "I had thought that Iḷam-Cēral was a fierce prince, as all had been lauding his great prowess in war. I now see I was mistaken. Having known him personally, I see he is as sweet as the waters of

24 *Puṟam* 210, 211.

Vāni river."[25] Parenthetically, it may be observed that Vāṇi (Skt. Vāhini) is a river running north of Coimbatore, and is different from Bhavāni, and also from Ani-Vāni which is another name for the Periyār. He sustained the glory and munificence of his illustrious ancestors like Śelvak-Kaḍuṅkō and the victors of Vāgai-parantalai and Viyalūr.[26] His land abounded in sandal wood, agil (*Dysoxylum malabariam*) and sugar-cane.[27] He was the lord of Toṇḍi, Kongar-Nāḍu, Kuṭṭuvar-Nāḍu and Pūḻi-Nāḍu.[28] He defeated Perum Cōḻa, Iḷam Paḻaiyan Māṟan and Vicci, and destroyed the 'five forts'.[29] He was a brave, good, just and impartial ruler; and the poet pronounces in exultation the following benediction: "As the result of thy just and impartial rule, may the clouds never fail to yield bounteous rain! May there be rich pasturage for cattle; may the joyous birds thrive in groves; may fruits and edible roots be plenteous; may grain grow in abundance; may the whole land offer thee reverent praise! May good and virtuous men fill the land! Swerve not from thy kingly duty! May thy arms be victorious; and may thou and thy consort be blessed with long life, health

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25 *Patiṟṟup-pattu* 86.

26 *Ibid.*, 88, 90.

27 *Ibid.*, 87.

28 *Ibid.*, 88, 90.

29 *Ibid.*, IX *Patigam.*

and happiness."[30] There can be no doubt that peace and plenty reigned over the land of this bountiful king. It is no wonder that Perum-Kunṛūr Kiḻār asks his brother bards to proceed to the court of this monarch, where they would have liberal largesse bestowed on them.[31] Perum-Kunṛūr Kiḻār[32] was most munificently rewarded with land, money and jewels for his poem by Iḷam-Cēral Irumpoṛai, who seems to have delighted in rewarding secretly.[33] He reigned, according to the colophon, for sixteen years.

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30 *Patiṛṛup-pattu,* 89.

31 *Ibid.,* 87.

32 Perum-Kunṛur Kiḻār is said to have sung *Puṛam* 266 in honour of Uruvapahrer Ilam-Śeṭ-Cenni (Colophon to Puṛam 266) ; but it seems to me the name of the Cōḻa is wrongly given there, and it should be Nalam-Kiḻḻi *alias* Śet-Cenni, who is also referred to as Ter Vaṉ Kiḻḻi.

33 Colophon of *Patigam* IX, *Pattiṛṛup-pattu.*

CHAPTER III.

Examination of Results.

This finishes the list of Cēras sung about in *Patiṟṟup-pattu.* Of the Cēras we have so-far considered, we can assert with confidence that Oḷvāḷ Perum-Cēral Irumpoṟai, Antuvan-Cēral Irumpoṟai, Śelva-kaḍunkō-vāḷiyātan, Perum-Cēral Irumpoṟai of Takaḍūr fame and Iḷam-Cēral Irumpoṟai ruled over the northern palatinate with Toṇḍi as their capital; and we may similarly assert that Vānavaramban Udiyan Cēralātan, Imayavaramban Nedum-Cēralātan, Palyānai Śelkeḷu-Kuṭṭuvan, Kaḷan-kāikaṇṇi-Nārmuḍic-Cēral and Śen-Kuṭṭuvan ruled at Vañci in the south. There can be no ḍoubt that both branches were of the same family. Iḷam-Cēral Irumpoṟai, the last of the Irumpoṟais celebrated in song in *Patiṟṟup-pattu* is described as descendant of Imayavaramban and Nārmuḍic-Cēral as well as of Perum-Cēral Irumporai.[1] How the necessity for two lines of Cēras may have risen I have already tried to explain; and it may be remembered that Palyānai Śelkeḷu-Kuṭṭuvan is also stated to have divided his kingdom among his kin. To which group should Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu-Cēralātan be assigned? After anxious consideration, I have come to the conclusion that

1 *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* 88.

he should be regarded as a ruler of the northern palatinate which had its capital at Toṇḍi.

Let us try to examine the results we have obtained. We saw Imayavaramban reigned for fifty-eight years. He had a brother, Palyānai Śelkeḻu-Kuṭṭuvan, who succeeded him and reigned for twenty-five years. Imayavaramban is said to have had three sons, all of whom are said to have been reigning Cēras. Of these three, Nārmuḍiccēral reigned for twenty-five years; and on his death he was succeeded by Śen-Kuṭṭuvan who reigned for fifty-five years. Supposing Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu-Cēralātan was a son of Imayavaramban and ruled in Vañci, he must have succeeded Śen-Kuṭṭuvan; and even on the supposition that Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu-Cēralātan was but a babe in arms when Imayavaramban died—and that is obviously all but impossible—he must have been at least one hundred and five years old when he became king, and thereafter reigned for thirty-eight years. This is palpably absurd. We may be told that, perhaps, the high eminence that Imayavaramban and Śen-Kuṭṭuvan occupied as conquering heroes, who made the military prowess of their armies felt even in North India, induced the ascription of an exaggerated period to the reign of each of these two kings; but this hypothesis alone would not help us to solve the difficulty; for even if we allowed the conventional period of twenty-five years to each king that preceded Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu-Cēralātan, he must have waited

seventy-five years after his father's death to ascend the throne of the Cēra kingdom. If, however, we could possibly hold that one of the alleged three sons of Imayavaramban ruled at Toṇḍi, instead of regarding all the three of them as having ruled at Vañci, the difficulty would be almost entirely obviated.

I may here glance at a suggestion that the learned author of *Cēran Śen-Kuṭṭuvan* has made. He is inclined to hold that there were not only two lines of Cēras ruling simultaneously in Vañci and Toṇḍi, but there was also a third line co-existing with them that ruled in Māntai! He accordingly thinks that while Śen-Kuṭṭuvan was reigning in Vañci, Nārmuḍiccēral was reigning in Māntai, and the Irumpoṛais in Toṇḍi. There is no warrant for this suggested disintegration of the Cēra kingdom into several small Cēra principalities. This was the time when the Cēra kingdom was growing into power, and stood in need of consolidation; and there was particularly a strong line of kings who were capable of keeping the Cēra kingdom intact, not to speak of further extending it. When for the elucidation of a difficulty, a hypothesis has perforce to be postulated, the hypothesis should be as simple and free from complication as possible. We know as a fact of history that there were two lines of Cēras, one ruling in Vañci and the other at Toṇḍi. If we can find authority for holding that one of Imayavaramban's sons

ruled at Toṇḍi and not at Vañci, the complication will be easily resolved.

Patiṟṟup-pattu affords some material that would help us in this direction. The *Patigam* of sixth *Patiṟṟup-pattu* says that the lifted cattle which Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu-Cēralātan recovered from Daṇḍāraniyam, a place in Ārya-Nāḍu, was removed by him to Toṇḍi and he there distributed cows among Brahmans, to whom a village in Kuḍa-Nāḍu was also given. From this we may assume that Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu-Cēralātan was ruling in Toṇḍi. This assumption receives support from the fact that he is associated with Naṟavu or Mangalore.[2] I have before postulated that Oḷvāḷ-Perumcēral Irumpoṟai of Karuvūr fame was sent by Palyānai Śelkeḻu-Kuṭṭuvan as the first viceroy of the northern palatinate and that he was succeeded probably by Antuvan-Cēral as ruler at Toṇḍi. Of these two Cēras, little is known definitely. We do not know how long they reigned. In dealing with Antuvan-Cēral Irumpoṟai, I have suggested that his reign witnessed an invasion by a Cōḻa who succeeded in capturing Pamalūr, and that Antuvan-Cēral died in the battle of Pōr, which was fought against the Cōḻa. In the circumstances, a strong man was needed in the northern province to succeed Antuvan-Cēral, and I suggest that such a man was found in Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu-Cēralātan. Even if he be held to

2 *Patiṟṟup-pattu* 60.

be the brother of Nārmuḍic-Cēral, I suggest that he was sent by his elder brother, the reigning king of the Cēra kingdom, to rule over the Toṇḍi province, as perhaps, Śelvak-kaḍunkō-Vāḷiyātan was too young to succeed his father Antuvan-Cēral as ruler in the critical and troublous times that then existed.

This is not a preposterous suggestion. But, was Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭuc-Cēralātan, really the brother of Nārmuḍic-Cēral? Are Cēralātan, the father of Nārmuḍic-Cēral and Kuḍakkō-Neḍum-Cēralātan, the father of Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭuc-Cēralātan, identical? I venture to hold that they are different, and that while Cēralātan, the father of Nārmuḍic-Cēral according to the *patigam* of IV *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* belonged to the Vañci line, Kuḍakkō-Neḍum-Cēralātan mentioned in *patigam* of VI *Patiṟṟup-pattu* as the father of Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu belonged to the Toṇḍi branch. In dealing with the battle of Pōr, I made the suggestion that the Cēra King, Kuḍakkō-Neḍum-Cēralātan who died in that battle was Antuvan-Cēral Irumpoṟai; and if that identification be accepted, it makes it easy to hold that Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu Cēralātan's father was otherwise known as Antuvan-Cēral, that Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu and Śelva-Kaḍunkō were consanguined brothers of whom the former was the elder, and he naturally succeeded Antuvan-Cēral as the ruler of the northern Palatinate. On this hypothesis which does not seem to be violent, the following table of contemporaneous kings

in the two branches may be constructed tentatively.

Cēras of Vañci.	Cēras of Toṇḍi.
1. Perum-Śōṟṟu Udiyan-Cēralātan.	
2. Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātan.	
3. Palyānai Śelkeḻu Kuṭṭuvan.	Karuvūr Ēṟiya Perum Cēral Irumpoṟai.
4. Kaḷankāik-kaṇṇi Nārmuḍic-Cēral.	Antuvan Cēral; Āḍu-kōṭ-pāṭṭuc-Cēralātan.
5. Śen-Kuṭṭuvan.	Śelvak-kaḍunkō-vāḻiyātan; Perumcēral Irumpoṟai.
	Iḷam-Cēral Irumpoṟai.

CHAPTER IV.

S. 1. *Kuṭṭuvan Kōdai alias Māk-kōdai.*

For the remaining Cēras of whom we read in Śangam literature, we have to depend mainly on the colophons appended to *Puṟanānūṟu* lyrics; and our results can only be tentative. And first as regards the main line, we see from the fifth decad of *Patiṟṟup-pattu* that Śen-Kuṭṭuvan had a son Kuṭṭuvan-Cēral, who was delivered by the former to Paraṇar. Pandit M. Raghava Aiyangar makes a happy suggestion that this probably means that the king entrusted his son for training and literary culture to the great poet. Accepting this suggestion, we may conclude that on the death of Śen-Kuṭṭuvan, Kuṭṭuvan-Cēral probably succeeded him. We find among the Cēramāns a king bearing the name Kuṭṭuvan-Kōdai; and I have little doubt that he is the same as Kuṭṭuvan-Cēral. Kuṭṭuvan-Kōdai is eulogised in *Puṟam* 51 by a poet called Kōnāṭṭu Ericcalūr Māḍalan Maturaikkumāranār. This poet has also sung of Ilavantip-paḷḷit-tuñciya Naḷam-Kiḷḷi Śeṭ-Cenni,[1] the Cōḷa whom in the war of succession that followed the death of Karikāla, we saw Śen-Kuṭṭuvan helped to ascend the throne. This renders it probable that Kuṭṭuvan-Kōdai was the next king in the main line after

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1 *Puṟam*, 61.

Śen-Kuṭṭuvan. If Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭuc-Cēralātan had reigned at Vañci, preceding Kuṭṭuvan-Kōdai, Maturaik-kumāranār must have waited at least 40 years after he had sung *Puṟam* 61 to sing *Puṟam* 54; and this circumstance lends additional strength to my suggestion that Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭuc-Cēralātan belonged to the Toṇḍi line. Possibly Kōdai's reign was not eventful and hardly counted in the way of wars and conquests. However it be, it is clear from *Puṟam* 54 that poets had easy access to his presence and that they were lavishly rewarded. This is not to be wondered at in a pupil of the great Paraṇar. It is my belief that Kuṭṭuvan-Cēral *alias* Kōdai is identical with Kōṭṭambalattut-tuñcia Māk-Kōdai, a royal poet, who like Hrothgar in Beowulf, 'the harp's sweet note awoke, and a song entoned both sooth and sad.' We have already referred to his poem, *Agam* 168, when dealing with Perum-Śōṟṟu Udiyan-Cēralātan. I give below an English adaptation of a pathetic lyric,[2] he has sung on the demise of his queen.

"What charm hath life hence-forth for me ?"
The king in his bereavement cried.
"My queen, how good and sweet was she!
The innocent of soul hath died.
My swelling sorrow knows no bound.
Alas! like to the common dead
I bore her to the burning ground
Where nought but spiny cactus spread.
A heap of fuel there arrayed.
Stood smould'ring her remains to claim:

2 *Puṟam*, 245.

With cruel hands my queen I laid
  Upon her couch of rising flame.
My queen hath left me. Like the sea
  Though deep and surging is my grief,
It has no strength, alas! to me
  From hated life to bring relief.
Would that grim death had come to me!
  The fairest queen on earth is dead!
The mainstay of my life was she!
  And I survive when she hath fled!"

S. 2. *Iḷam-Kuṭṭuvan.*

Aganāṉūṟu mentions as the author of *Agam* 153 one Cēramān Iḷam-Kuṭṭuvan. This Iḷam-Kuṭṭuvan or Kuṭṭuvan the younger is, perhaps, the son of Kuṭṭuvan-Cēral, the son of Śen-Kuṭṭuvan. Kuṭṭuvan is the name of the king; and the descriptive word Iḷam is prefixed to it to distinguish him from, perhaps, Śen-Kuṭṭuvan, the *great* Kuṭṭuvan. Except that he was a Cēramān or reigning Cēra, nothing further is known about him. The following is an English translation of *Agam* 153 attributed to this Cēramān—

My heart with grief and pain intense is filled!
E'en when with sweet-voiced playmates she pursued
The shining ball, tired out she used to feel!
And now, cajoled by one hard-hearted, she
Hath sudden yeilded to his warm embrace,
And with him left at night, deserting us!

How can her tender feet traverse the dry
And trackless desert, where from bamboos tall,
That in the wind against each other rub,
Burst leaping flames, and to the mountain slope
Convey her, where tall *Kongu* trees, which reach
The star-bespangled sky, shook by the wind,
Shed flowers honey-filled, like flambeaux flung,
Which are too hot to hold, by hands away!

S. 3. *Pālaipāḍiya-Perum-Kaḍumkō.*

Perhaps next in order in the main line came Pālaipāḍiya-Perum-Kaḍumkō. As it is, Pālaipāḍiya-Perum-Kaḍumkō stands unrelated to anyone. We can see from his *Pālaikkali* that he was a friend of the Pāṇḍya, and the Pāṇḍya Kingdom was well-known to him[2a]; and we see from *Puṟam* 11, perhaps the only poem sung about him, that he was the ruler of Vañci, and was a liberal patron of bards and minstrels. I give here an English rendering of the poem, the author of which is a lady named Pēy-makaḷ Iḷa-Vēyini.

The valiant king renowned in song, who rules
O'er far-famed Vañci, rising to the skies,
Where bashful maids with rounded arms that shine
With glistening hair and decked with jewels bright,
To images of sand make offerings
Of flowers gathered from o'erhanging boughs,
Before they plunge into the waters cool
Of Porunai, he through the fortress broke
Of valorous foes and made them turn and flee!

2a *Pālai,* 34; 29 and 30.

With jewels rare of burnished gold immense
Did he reward her who his prowess sang!
And on him, who her song accompanied
Bestowed he lotus flow'rs of flaming gold
With threads of shining silver closely strung.

In the scheme of succession that has been so far constructed from material supplied by ancient Tamil literature, there appears to be no room for introducing another reigning prince between Udiyan Cēralātan and Iḷam-Kuṭṭuvan. Pālaipāḍiya-Perum-Kaḍumkō is not an imaginary figure; but he was undoubtedly one of the ancient Cēra Kings who reigned in Vañci-on-the-Porunai. I had once suggested that he was anterior in date to Śen-Kuṭṭuvan; but on further consideration, I have come to entertain the belief that he was posterior to Śen-Kuṭṭuvan. He must be somewhat anterior to Nallantuvanār, the redactor of *Kalit-tokai*. Nallantuvanār has been sung about by Marudan Iḷa-Nākanār,[3] who was a contemporary of the Pāṇḍya, Ilavantikaip-paḷḷit-tuñciya Nanmāṟan[4] of whom another contemporary was Nakkīrar;[5] and Nakkīrar, as we shall see presently, has sung of a succeeding generation of Kings. I, therefore, propose to place Pālaipāḍiya-Perum-Kaḍumkō after Iḷam-Kuṭṭuvan. It is obvious that Pālaipāḍiya Cēra cannot be placed later, as it was at the instance of the Pāṇḍya King Ugrap-peru-vaḷuti, that *Kalit-tokai* was redacted.

3 *Agam*, 59.
4 *Puṟam*, 55.
5 *Ibid.*, 56.

About the kingly exploits of Pālaipāḍiya Perum-Kaḍumkō, we have no record; but as I have shown elsewhere he has left an imperishable name as a Tamil poet. His poems, all of which relate to *Pālai-tiṇai* in *Agap-poruḷ,* reveal the highest spirit of chivalry. In *Naṟṟiṇai* 9, he says that the gaining of the lady that one loves is like meeting the god one seeks. In *Agam* 185, he says that the man who leaves his love must be one with a heart of hard iron. It is pleasing to note in his poems the loyalty and tenderness of the wife, and the fidelity of the lady's companion. In *Agam* 267, where the lady's maid tries to comfort the lady, whose husband has left in quest of riches, the wife declares that if a husband leaves his spouse, it is due entirely to the inability of the latter to detain him with her. He frankly denounces the unsympathetic minister who misleads the king into deeds of injustice and oppression.[6] It is clear from *Naṟṟiṇai*[7] that the lighting of lamps on Kārtigai day was common even in those days, as he likens a tree in blossom to the appearance of a town illuminated on Tiru-kārtigai day. In *Pālai I* he refers to the reaction of elephants to music, which has the power of soothing them. Toddy was a favourite drink in his day,[8] and people believed in

6 *Pālai,* 7 and 9.

7 *Naṟ.* 202.

8 *Pālai,* 3.

omens.[9] Women wore along with their *tāli* (தாலி) a gold jewel fashioned like or encasing the teeth of leopards.[10]

I have elsewhere given English renderings of several lyrics by this Cēra from his *Pālaik-kali* and from *Kuṛuntokai.*[11] He is a master of Pālai-tiṇai. The appropriate motif of Pālai amatory poetry is separation; and it describes the effect on the wife when her husband proposes to go to distant lands across an intervening desert in quest of wealth. As an illustration of the royal poet's art, imagery and poetic imagination, I shall give here an English echo of the opening lines of his *Pālaik-kali* and of a short poem by him included in *Kuṛuntokai.*

As blazed the wrath of Śiva, when to save
Ayan and other gods, who sought his aid,
He smote the dreaded, troublous Rākṣasas,
And their destructive triple fortress laid
In utter ruin, with like fierceness burns
The sun, whose heat intense beats on the rocks
And bursting them, with wreckage blocks the way
In that vast desert!

—*Pālai,* 1.

Great is my spouse's love for me!
His early coming I foresee!
Where he has gone, he eke will see
Bull elephant with gallantry
Break branches from the *Atti* tree

9. *Pālai,* 10.
10 *Agam,* 7.
11 *J.I.H.,* XI, Part 2; *Q.J.M.S.,* XXIII, No. 3.

And give them to its famished mate,
It may its hunger satiate!
That sight will speed him on to me!

—*Kuṟum*, 37.

S. 4. *Mā-Veṇkō.*

Next, perhaps, came Cēramān Mā-Veṇkō, of whom there is mention made in the colophon to *Puṟam* 367. We may gather from it that he was a friend of Ugrap-peruvaḻuti, the Pāṇḍya, and Rājasūyamvēṭṭa Perunaṟ-kiḷḷi, the Cōḻa, whom I regard as the same as Neḍumuḍik-kiḷḷi mentioned in *Maṇimēkalai* as the Victor of Kāriyāṟu.[12] No other information is available about him.

We have no means of knowing who succeeded this Cēra at Vañci; but I hazard the guess that, perhaps, it was Cēramān Vañcan whose capital is described as the unapproachable ancient city of renown, *Puṟam* 398. We see from *Agam* 149, that a Pāṇḍya, probably Ugrap-Peruvaḻuti's successor, sacked Muśiri, the port of Vañci and *Puṟam* 373 records that Vañci itself was invested and captured by Kiḷḷi-vaḷavan. From *Puṟam* 36, in which Ālattūr Kiḻār tries to dissuade him from his march on Vañci, we gather that the Cēra ruling then at Vañci was effiminate and afraid to take the field against the advancing Cōḻa. However, the Cōḻa advanced and Vañci-mūtūr fell, an

12 *Maṇi*, XIX, l. 126.

event over which even a poetess of Kiḷḷi-vaḷavan's court, Mārōk-kattu Nappaśalaiyār, expresses grief in *Puṛam* 37. The fall of Vañci was obviously an event of great moment, and was unexpected; and in *Puṛam* 39, the same lady, addressing the Cōḷa exclaims: 'In what strains shall I praise thy great might and glory when thou hast brought down the renowned Cēra, whose ancestor had set the imprint of his bow on the long, golden peaked range of the Himalaya and whose impregnable capital city of Vañci has fallen before thy advance![13] Kiḷḷi-Vaḷavan is said to have invaded Kūḍal also,[14] and he is referred to as the Cōḷa of that name who died at Kuḷamuṛṛam. Dr. Pope thinks, and perhaps he is correct, that Kuḷamuṛṛam and Kurāppaḷḷi are the same.

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13 யாங்கன மொழிகோ யானே யோங்கிய
வரையளந் தறியாப் பொன்படு நெடுங்கோட்
டிமயஞ் சூட்டிய வேம விற் பொறி
மாண்வினை நெடுந்தேர் வானவன் றொலைய
வாடா வஞ்சி வாட்டு நின்
பீடு கெழு நோன்றாள் பாடுங்காலே. *Puṛam*, 39.

14 *Agam* 346.

CHAPTER V.

S. 1. *Yānaik-kaṭ-Śēy Māntaram-Cēral.*

We may now turn to the northern line. In that branch, the outstanding figure is Yānaik-kaṭ-Śēy Māntaram-Cēral Irumpoṛai, whom I would place some time after Iḷam-Cēral Irumpoṛai; for before Māntaram-Cēral we must place Ātan-Avini, of whom Ōrampōkiyar has sung in *Ain-kuṛunūṛu,* a Śangam collection which was redacted at the instance of Yānaik-kaṭ-Śēy Māntaram-Cēral.[1] Nothing is known of this prince; but we may be safe in regarding him as the immediate predecessor of Yānaik-kaṭ-Śēy. Yānaik-kaṭ-Śēy Māntaram-Cēral[2] is wrongly asserted by Mr. Kanakasabhai, in his '*Tamils 1800 Years Ago*' to be the son of Śen-Kuṭṭuvan; and this incorrect statement has unfortunately been repeated by Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar and others, and has found its way into a recent text-book of Indian History.[3] He is an outstanding figure among the later Cēras of the Śangam period; and we find as many as six poems relating to him in *Puṛanānūṛu.* We can see from the poems that he was a wise ruler, beloved of his subjects who enjoyed peace and prosperity, and protection from external

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1 *Vide Ain.* 1–10.

2 See my article on "*The Last Great Cēra of the Śangam Period*" in Dr. S. K. Aiyangar Commn. Volume, pp. 217–21.

3 *Banerji's Junior History of India,* p. 94.

enemies. He was also a great warrior, and in his early wars he seems to have had uniform success; but we have no details of those wars.

Puṛam 20 gives us a vivid description of this king; and I give below an English rendering of it as it shows how highly he was loved and adored.

The deep sea may be sounded; and the width
Of the vast earth, the air-pervading space
And eke the shapeless, overhanging sky,
May all be measured; but, O mighty King!
Thy wisdom, love and generosity
Defy all measure! Those who in the shade
Of thy protection live know but the heat
Of kitchen fire and of the glowing sun!
They only know the rainbow in the sky
But not the bow of slaughter! Nor do they
Another weapon know except the plough!
Illustrious King! Thy valiant foes thou hast
With mighty armies vanquished, and their lands
Their fruits for thy enjoyment yield! Thy earth
But pregnant ladies eat to satisfy
Their craving, and is never touched by foes!
In thy well guarded forts thy arrows rest;
And in thy sceptre righteousness resides!
What though new birds may come or old birds leave,
What-e'er betide, thou dost thy kingdom guard
And peace ensure. And so with anxious hope
The world doth pray no harm should thee befall.

In *Puṛam* 53 we read that he won a victory at Viḷankil, though it does not appear over whom. He had also his reverses. Among his wars was one he waged with Talaiālam-kānattuc-Ceṛuvēṉṟa Neḍum-Śeḻiyan, one of the greatest kings of the Pāṇḍya dynasty; and in

that war, we learn from *Puṟam* 17 that he was made a captive by the Pāṇḍya. We read that his previous successes in war had been so constant that this reverse filled all with surprise. However, by his own strategy and valour he escaped, and the incident is immortalised in song in *Puṟam* 17, by Kuṟumkōḻiyūr Kiḻār. I give its translation below, as it supplies a good and interesting portraiture of the early Cēras, as also of Yānaik-kaṭ-Śēy.

Scion of the royal house whose kings have ruled
As undisputed monarch o'er the land
Which from Kumari on the south extends
To the high mountain on the north, and lies
Between the eastern and the western sea!

Thy sires their royal sceptre even held
O'er all their subjects whereso-e'er they lived,
In hill or mountain, forest or in town;
Protecting them with equal justice, they
Chastised all wrong and, as their due, received
The share of yield from land by law allowed.

O Toṇḍi's lord! Thy land the mountain fence
Protects. Its sandy beach like moon-light shines;
There flourish stately palms which star-high grow,
Laden with bunches of sweet cocoanuts.
There spread extensive fields; and in the ponds
Of water clear bright flaming lotus blooms!

E'en as a strong and stately elephant
Regardless of the treach'rous pit whose mouth
Is cunningly o'erlaid, impetuous
Unto it rushes, and with tusks, full-grown
And murd'rous, gores the sides and fills it up
With earth it has dug up, and getting out
Goes back and joins the herd in its old haunt,
So thou, the victor in thy wars, whose foes

Bereft of their possessions bow in fee
To gain thy friendship or from policy,
Urged by thy courage irresistible,
Unmindful of thy foe, didst rush to war,
And when, to the bewilderment of all
Thy kith and kin, thou wert a captive made,
By thy unaided strength and stratagem
Thou didst redeem thy lapse and didst escape
And to thy realm and relatives return.
O king of Kuḍanād! I come to praise
Thy valour and thy fame. Unlimited
Is thy munificence! Thy warriors' shields
For rain-clouds are mistook! Large swarms of bees
Settle on thy war-elephants, which they
Mistake for mountains huge! Thy battle hosts,
The terror of thy enemies, are vast
As the great sea to which the clouds resort
For their supply of water! And the sound
Of thy war-drums resemble so the roar
Of thunder that dread snakes and venomous,
Trembling with fright, hang down their hooded heads!

It must be noted that the battle referred to in this poem cannot be the well-known battle of Talaiālamkānam, which the Pāṇḍya Neḍum-Śeḻiyan, won against the confederate army of the Cēra, the Cōḻa and the five Vēḷir chiefs: for we learn from *Puṟam*[4] and *Agam*[5] that in that battle the Cēra, the Cōḻa and the chiefs that were their allies were slain by the Pāṇḍyan hero. We read also that in a battle

4 *Puṟam,* 76 and 77.

5 *Agam,* 36.

between Rājasūyam-vēṭṭa Perunaṛ-Kiḷḷi and Yānaik-kaṭ-Śēy, the latter met with defeat.[6]

His internal administration appears to have been a blessing to his subjects. Poruntil Iḷam-Kīranāṛ, who is one of the poets that have sung about him, says it requires a bard of the eminence of Kapilar to sing the praises of this king.[7] Another poet extols him for his just rule under which his subjects enjoyed the benefits of peace, 'knowing no bow except the rainbow, and no weapon except the plough',[8] and praises the Cēra kingdom as a heaven on earth.[9] He was also a great patron of learning; and it was at his instance that *Ain-kuṛunūṛu* was collected. *Puṛa-nānūṛu* has a touching lament on his death which one of his bards, Kūḍalūr-Kiḻār had dreaded would happen as he had witnessed the falling of a meteor at midnight, when the planets and stars were in a particular conjunction.[10] Unfortunately the astronomical details cannot help us to discover the date of his demise. I am tempted to suggest that he is, perhaps, the hero of the missing 10th *Patiṛṛup-pattu.*

S. 2. *Kōk-Kōdai-Mārban.*

The next in that line will be Kōk-kōdai-Mārban. Poigaiyār, his court poet, tells us

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6 *Puṛam,* 125
7 *Ibid.,* 53.
8 *Ibid.,* 20.
9 *Ibid.,* 22.
10 *Ibid.,* 229.

that he ruled at Toṇḍi, and that his country was the sea-board region;[11] and though it was *Neytal* land, it also abounded in *Kuṛiñci* and *Marutam* land or rich forests and paddy fields. The poet Nakkīrar tells us[12] of an invasion of Kūḍal or Madura by Kiḷḷivaḷavan who slew Paḻaiyan-Māṛan in that campaign, to the great joy of Kōḍai-Mārban. Possibly Paḻaiyan-Māṛan, who we saw had been defeated in battle by Iḷam-Cēral Irumpoṛai, began to give trouble to the Cēra, whose power after the defeat of Yānaik-kaṭ-Śēy Māntaram-Cēral by the Cōḻa and the Pāṇḍya had begun to wane; and hence Kōdai-Mārban was rejoiced to see this troublesome chief defeated and killed by the Cōḻa. No details relating to this Cēra are available.

He apparently took his name Kōdai-Mārban from his great ancestor Perum-Cēral Irumpoṛai.[13]

S. 3. *Kaṇaikkāl Irumpoṛai.*

The next in order in that branch is Kaṇaikkāl Irumpoṛai. Poigaiyār was his court poet. Mūvan, a chief who had incurred this Cēra's displeasure, was punished by having his teeth pulled out and fixed on the gate at Toṇḍi as warning.[14] Kaṇaikkāl Irumpoṛai does not

11 *Puṛam*, 48, 49.
12 See *Agam*, 366.
13 Cf. *Patiṛṛup-pattu*, 79, l. 7.
14 *Naṛṛiṇai*, 18.

stand alone in inflicting this mode of punishment; for we read of other similar instances.[15] We do not know anything about his reign; but we have definite information about his end, which was very heroic. We gather from *Agam*[16] that Kaṇaiyan, a feudatory and general of the Cēra, along with other feudatory chiefs owing allegiance to the Cēra, met in battle Paḷaiyan, the Cōḷa general, who lost his life in the engagement. This infuriated Śen-Kaṇān, the Cōḷa King, who marched against Kaṇaiyan, killed him in battle and captured Kaḷumalam, a city of the Cēra.[17] Kaṇaikkāl Irumpoṛai, the Cēra King, could not stand this, and naturally went to war with Kō-Śen-Kaṇān. At the battle of Pōr, he was defeated and taken prisoner by Kō-Śen-Kaṇān, and confined at Kuḍavāyil-Kōṭṭam.[18] It was on that occasion that Poigaiyār sang *Kaḷavaḷi-Nāṛpatu* in praise of Śen-Kaṇān, and won the release of his patron, Kaṇaikkāl Irumpoṛai. In the meantime, Kaṇaikkāl feeling thirsty, asked for water which was not readily supplied; and he was so much stung by the insult that he preferred to die, rather than accept the water that the warders were so tardy in supplying. Before the order for release could be carried out, the proud and heroic Cēra had breathed his last;

15 Vide *Agam*, 211.
16 *Agam*, 44.
17 *Agam*, 270.
18 *Puṛam*, 74.

but he left a short poem, full of true epic grandeur, explaining the circumstances of his death. I give below a translation of Kaṇaikkāl Irumpoṟai's swan-song.

Lo! Issue born but as a lifeless child,
Or even as a shapeless mass of flesh,
Amongst the kingly class with sword is clove!
But meaner e'en than these am I, confined
Like a chained dog, condemned to live in shame!
Can he be king-born who with his own mouth,
Too weak his body's craving to resist,
Begs for a cup of water from his foe?
'Tis better far to die than thus to live![19]

We have now dwelt with all the Cēra Kings mentioned in *Patiṟṟup-pattu* and *Puṟa-nānūṟu*. From the foregoing account, we are in a position to continue the line of succession in the two branches, from where we have left before.

Vañci Branch.

1. Kuṭṭuvan-Cēral or Kuṭṭuvan-Kōdai.
2. Cēramān Iḷam-Kuṭṭuvan.
3. Pālaipāḍiya Perum-Kaḍumkō.
4. Mā-Veṉkō.
5. Cēramān Vañcan.

Toṇḍi Branch.

1. Ātan-Avani.
2. Yānaik-kaṭ-Śēy Māntaram-Cēral.
3. Kō-kōdai Mārban.
4. Kaṇaikkāl-Irumpoṟai.

Though we have no means of knowing the exact relationship in which each succeeding

19 *Puṟam.* There is a fine play in Tamil, bearing the title *Māna Vijayam,* written by the late Pandit V. G. Suryanarayana Sastri, based on this incident.

ruler in the above succession list stood to his predecessor, I think we may safely suppose the correctness of the above order of succession in either branch. Kuṭṭuvan-Kōdai or Māk-Kōdai may be regarded as contemporaneous with Perum-Cēral Irumporai and to their period may perhaps be assigned Kāriyāṟṟut-tuñciya Neḍum-Kiḷḷi besides possibly Cōḷa Naḷam-Kiḷḷi Śeṭ-Cenni. Mā-Veṇkō and Yānaik-kaṭ-Śēy were both contemporaries of the Cōḷa Rājasūyamvēṭṭa Perunaṟ-Kiḷḷi; and Kō-Kōdai Mārban was contemporaneous with Kiḷḷi-Vaḷavan, whom I regard as the same as the Cōḷa of that name who died at Kuḷamuṟṟam.[20] Lastly Kaṇaikkāl Irumporai and Cōḷan Śen-Kaṇān were contemporaries. Thus the Śangam works enable us to gain a connected account of the Cēras for about twelve generations from Udiyan-Cēral to Kaṇaikkāl Irumporai; and during all this period the Cēra dynasty had continuous social or political relation, the latter sometimes friendly and sometimes hostile, with the Cōḷa line of kings from Tittan's son, Pōrvaikkō Perunaṟ-Kiḷḷi to Śen-Kaṇān. The statement found in some books that the Cēra ascendency passed away in the course of one generation is wrong.[21]

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20 *Puṟam*, 373.

21 E.g. Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar's *Beginnings of South Indian History*, p. 131.

S. 4. *Rule of Succession.*

In our account of the succession, the rule of lineal descent from father to son has been followed. Recently it has been sought to make out that the rule of succession followed among the Śangam Cēras was collateral, not from father to son, but from uncle to nephew. This is a gratuitous attempt suggested, perhaps, by the prevalence of Marumakkattāyam succession in modern Malabar. When and in what circumstances Marumakkattāyam law of inheritance came to be followed in Malabar, need not now be investigated; but it is quite certain that succession among Śangam Cēras was not regulated by Marumakkattāyam law. Mr. M. Srinivasa Aiyangar in his *Tamil Studies*[22] cavalierly assumed that the Śangam Cēras were succeeded by their nephews or sister's sons; but the assumption fell flat on the Tamil world. Quite recently, however, Mr. Somasundara Bharati of the Annamalai University has revived the story.[23] It seems to me that he has proceeded on a misunderstanding of the relevant texts in *Patiṛṛup-pattu.* The portions bearing on the question appear in the *patigams,* and they are extracted below:—

1. உதியஞ் சேரற்கு
வெளியன் வேண்மாணல்லினி யீன்ற மகன்
... ...
இமையவரம்ப னெடுஞ் சேரலாதன்

Patiṛṛup-pattu, II *Patigam.*

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22 See p. 103 ff.
23 See *Śen Tamil,* Vol. XXVII.

2. சேரலாதற்கு
வேளாவிக் கோமான்
பதுமன் றேவி யீன்றமகன்
... ...
களங்காய்க் கண்ணி நார்முடிச் சேரல்
Patiṛṛup-pattu, IV *Patigam.*

3. நெடுஞ்சேரலாதற்குச்
சோழன் மணக்கிள்ளி யீன்ற மகன்
... ...
... ... செங்குட்டுவன்
Patiṛṛup-pattu, V *Patigam.*

4. நெடுஞ்சேரலாதற்குவேள
ளாவிக்கோமான் றேவி யீன்ற மகன்
... ...
ஆடுகோட் பாட்டுச் சேரலாதன்
Patiṛṛup-pattu, VI *Patigam.*

5. அந்துவற் கொருதந்தை
யீன்றமகள் பொறையன் பெருந்தேவி யீன்ற மகன்
... ...
செல்வக் கடுங்கோ வாழியாதன்
Patiṛṛup-pattu, VII *Patigam.*

6. செல்வக் கடுங்கோ வுக்கு
வேளாவிக்கோமான் பதுமன்றேவி யீன்ற மகன்
... ...
பெருஞ்சேரலிரும்பொறை
Patiṛṛup-pattu, VIII *Patigam.*

7. குட்டுவனிரும்பொறைக்கு மையூர்கிழாஅன்
வேண்மாள் அந்துவஞ் செள்ளை யீன்றமகன்
... ...
இளஞ்சேர லிரும் பொறை
Patiṛṛup-pattu, IX *Patigam.*

In the first extract Vēṇmāṇallini is composed of *Vēḷ* (வேள்) *Māḷ* (மாள்) and *Nallini* (நல்லினி). *Māḷ* (மாள்) means *Magaḷ* (மகள்), daughter, as

Mān (மான்) means *Magan* (மகன்) son. So the passage literally means: Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātan, the son born to Udiyan-Cēral by Nallini, the daughter of Veḷiyan Vēḷ, or Veḷiyan, the Vēḷir chief. The translation of the second extract is: Nārmuḍic-Cēral, the son born to Cēralātan by Vēḷ-Āvikkōmān Paduman-Dēvi, that is, Paduman-Dēvi, the daughter of Vēḷ-Āvikkōmān. It was not unusual, and even today in the Tamil country it is usual, to place before the name of the daughter a surname denoting her father. In the preceding extract we have Veḷiyan Vēḷ-māḷ Nallini. A classical example of this usage is supplied by the name of the authoress of *Puṛam* 83, 84 and 85, Perumkōḻi Nāykan Magaḷ-Nakkaṇṇaiyār.[23a] *Dēvi* does not mean here *wife* as it has been mistakenly construed; nor does it mean *daughter,* as contended by others. It is really a part of the name of the lady. The text in the third extract is apparently faulty as there is no lady mentioned in it, unless we take Maṇakkiḷḷi to denote a lady's name. Then Cōḻan Maṇakkiḷḷi would mean Maṇakkiḷḷi whose father was the Cōḻa. *Śilappadhikaram,* however, tells us that Senkuṭṭuvan's mother's name was Naṛcōṇai, and I

23a *Cf.* அஞ்சில் ஆந்தை மகள் நாகையார்; *Agam,* 352.
கழார்க்கீரனெயிற்றியார்; *Agam,* 163; 217; 235 and 294.
குமிழிஞாழார் நப்பசலையார் *Agam,* 160.
பொதும்பில் புல்லாளங் கண்ணியார் *Agam,* 154.
பேய்மகள் இளவெயினி *Puṛam,* 11.

would, therefore, insert Naṟcōṇai after Maṇakkiḷḷi to get the true reading. In the next extract *Dēvi* is the name of the lady, her father being Vēḷ-Āvikkōmān; and she bore a son, Āḍu-kōṭpāttu-Cēralātan to Neḍum-Cēralātan. In the fifth extract Poṟaiyan Perum-Dēvi, the daughter of Orutantai bore Antuvan a son, Śelvak-kaḍunkō. Here Poṟaiyan Perum-Dēvi may either be the name of the lady or, as is probable, it may mean the 'Queen of the Poṟaiyan' or Cēra. In the next extract, the name is the same as in the second extract and the same explanation as that given in that connection will apply. The last extract says, Maiyūrkiḻān Vēṇmāḷ Antuvan-Śeḷḷai bore Iḷam-Cēral to Kuṭṭuvan-Irumpoṟai. It is clear that the name of the lady is Antuvan-Śeḷḷai, the daughter of Maiyūr-Kiḻān-Vēḷ. Reading the relevent portions, therefore, carefully, we see there is no warrant for saying that there is any trace in them to suggest that the succession was not linear, from father to son, but was collateral, from uncle to nephew.

In *Patiṟṟup-pattu,*[24] Imayavaramban and Iḷam-Cēral Irumpoṟai are urged to rival the ancestors of their race and it will be difficult to believe that the ancestors whom they were exhorted to rival were not their paternal fore-fathers. Again Śelvak-kaḍunkō is addressed as

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24 *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* 14 and 85.

முன்றிணை முதல்வர்போல நின்று.

சான்றோர் பெருமகன்,[25] the illustrious son of great ancestors and Śenkuṭṭuvan is described as இமயத்து வானவர் மருள மலை விற் பூட்டிய வானவர் தோன்றல்,[26] 'the descendant of the Cēra who imprinted the mark of his bow on the Himalayas', alluding to Imayavaramban. It will again be difficult to say that the references in these instances are not to direct lineage and ancestry. The advocate of Maṛumakkattāyam succession among the Śangam Cēras would have us believe that Cēra women belonged to a matriarchal family, but they were freely married by Vēḷs and Cōḻas, who were not Maṛumakkavaḻi people. The children born of these marriages had no right to their father's estate, but perforce took their uncle's to the prejudice of their uncle's sons, whose mothers might quite conceivably have been daughters of Cōḻa, Pāṇḍya and Vēḷir families. The Cēra's sons would, as a result, have no right in their parental family; nor would they have any in the families from which their mothers came, unless those families also followed the Maṛumakkattāyam system. And nobody will suggest that the succession among the Cōḻas, Pāṇḍyas and Vēḷir was from uncle to nephew and not from father to son.[27]

25 *Patiṛṛup-pattu*, 67.

26 *Śilap.*, XXV, ll. 1–3.

27 See also M. Raghava Aiyangar's *Cēravēntar Tāyvaḻakku* and V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar's *The Marumakkattāyam* and the *Śangam Literature*, Z.1.1. Leipzig, IX, 3, pp. 255 ff.

S. 5. *A strange view of Patiṟṟup-pattu.*

Before we conclude this account, which has been constructed solely from the Śangam classics, we may just glance at a strange assertion about *Patiṟṟup-pattu* in which a recent critic has indulged.[28] He says that all the decads of *Patiṟṟup-pattu* or at least a good portion of it should be the work of a single author, and the redactor with no clue about the authorship, might have ascribed the poems to different poets. Or the redactor had a number of poems by various authors and he made a judicious selection and arranged them on a uniform plan. The marked difference in style, thought and literary execution that any one can easily see between one decad and another rules out the probability and even the possibility of the whole of *Patiṟṟup-pattu* being the work of a single poet. If, however, it was the work of a single author, how was it that his very name had been forgotten? He could not have wantonly suppressed it. We are not told why a poet should have practised such a deliberate and calculated joke on the literary world. Surely his name and eminence as a poet would not have suffered if he had owned them as his; on the other hand, the indisputable merit of the poems would have at once won for him an enviable position of pre-eminence among the

28 Vide *The Chronology of the Early Tamils,* by K. N. Sivaraja Pillai, p. 37.

ancient poets of the Tamil land. By the device that he has adopted, he has wilfully achieved obscurity; for even his very name is unknown. And was there even an absence of tradition about the authorship when the redaction was made? Speculations like this are unprofitable. Each decad has come to us as the work of a different poet; and the poems contain internal evidence to show that all the decads cannot have had the same authorship. Each decad professes to be a contemporary record of the achievements of its hero; and making full allowance for the predilections of court poets, one can still accept them as cogent contemporary documents, as there is not sufficient reason for questioning their authenticity.

S. 6. *Kēraḷōtpatti.*

I should say a word about *Kēraḷōtpatti*, which is regarded as the oldest account in Malayalam relating to Kēraḷa history. It, however, seems to me that to glean history from this work is as hopeless as to seek for a needle in a haystack. Some one has not inappropriately, though with unnecessary severity of language, described it as a farrago of legendary nonsense. It is a work of about the 18th century; and it professes to tell us the story of Kēraḷa from the time when at Paraśurāma's command the country arose from out the azure main. The floating traditions on which the narrative was sought to be built were unhappily

far too hazy to present any picture in perspective; and thus even as a source-book of early Kēraḷa history it cannot unfortunately be of any real use. It tells us that after a period of indigenous kings, who were generally incompetent, the people selected kings from the neighbouring countries and brought them to Kērala, on the understanding that each was to rule for twelve years! These foreign rulers who were brought into the country were known as *Perumāḷs;* and the earliest of them is said to be one Kēya Perumāḷ, who made Allur or Kodungallur his capital. A suggestion has been made that this Perumāḷ is Perum-Śōṟṟu Udiyan-Cēralātan; but I see absolutely no warrant for this. It is said that after him were brought in succession into Kēraḷa, Cōḻa-perumāḷ, Pāṇḍi-perumāḷ, Cōḻiya or Kēraḷa-perumāḷ, Taḷubham-perumāḷ, Indra-perumāḷ, Ārya-perumāḷ and others! It is obvious that the author had heard of invasions of Kēraḷa by some Pāṇḍya, Cōḻa and other neighbouring kings or chiefs, who probably retired to their territory after their raid; and from that he wove this fanciful list of Perumāḷs brought by the people into Kēraḷa to rule over the country! Even upon a most sympathetic consideration of the legendary mess presented in the pages of *Kēraḷōtpatti,* all that has been claimed for the work is that it may supply materials 'to fill up some parts of the wide gap in the history of the country from the fourth to the ninth century

A.C.'[29] The epoch we have been studying is, as will be shown later on, anterior to this period; and *Kēraḷōtpatti* cannot, therefore, be of any use for our purpose, even supposing it were possible to make it serve the purposes of history.

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29 S. R. V. Research Institute, *Bulletin*, 2.

CHAPTER VI.

Vañci-mūtūr.

S. 1.

Among the problems of ancient Cēra history, nothing is of greater interest or importance than the identification of Vañci, the capital of the ancient Cēra Kingdom.

Puṛam 11 conveys the information that a Cēra king, said to be Pālai-pāḍiya Perum Kaḍunkō, was ruling in Vañci, where the cool waters of the Porunai flow; and the scholiast, of whom unfortunately nothing is known, explains Vañci as Karuvūr, and Porunai as Ānporunṭam. This has recently given occasion for learned disquisitions by some Tamil scholars,[1] who have tried to establish that Vañci is Karūr in the Trichinopoly District. That Vañci is Kodum-kolūr (Cranganore) of which Tiruvañci-kaḷam is a suburb, has been held as an undisputed axiom by Tamil scholars from the beginning; and the reasoning by which that view has recently been attempted to be controverted is more perplexing than convincing. I propose to state a few relevant facts of outstanding significance, that will help us in the solution of the question.

The close connection of *Śilappadhikāram* and *Maṇimēkalai* with the Cēra country and

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1 See for example Mahāvidvān R. Raghava Aiyangar's *Vañcimānagar.*

its capital city is well known; and it is worthy of note that, while they speak of Vañci or Vañci-mūtūr, they do not mention Karuvūr at all. *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* which is devoted entirely to the praise of the Cēras, does not so much as even mention Karuvūr, while it refers to Vañci-mūtūr. The *Puṟanānūṟu*[1a] collection, which contains many lyrics in praise of Cēra kings, refers by name to Vañci; but it does not mention Karuvūr anywhere. Among the *Aga-nāṉūṟu* collection, two poems mention Vañci, and one mentions Karuvūr;[2] and this is the only instance in ancient poetic literature, so far as the published works of the Śangam age go, of Karuvūr appearing in the text. In *Paripāḍal,* no mention of Karuvūr is made; but Vañci[3] occurs, and is described as of equal importance with Madura, and Kōḷi (Uṟaiyūr). So too, in the *Pattup-pāṭṭu*[4] collection, Vañci alone occurs; and its position in the Cēra kingdom is described to be of the same eminence as Madura in the Pāṇḍya kingdom and Uṟantai in the Cōḷa kingdom. *Kaḷavaḻi-nāṟpatu* was composed by Poigaiyār to secure the release of Cēramān Kaṇaikkāḷ Irumpoṟai, who had been made a captive by Cōḻan Kō-Śeṅkaṇṇān; and in that poem too, only

1a See *Puṟam,* 11, 32, 39, etc.

2 See *Agam,* 263, 396 and 93.

3 See p. 175 (ed. 1918).

4 See *Śirupāṇāṟṟuppaḍai,* l. 50.

Vañci occurs[5] and not Karuvūr. An examination of the Śangam works thus shows that the ancient poets knew the capital city of the Cēra as only Vañci; and except in only one solitary lyric in *Agaṉāṉūṟu,*[6] they have not mentioned Karuvūr at all. Even this solitary instance need not be regarded as really an exception; for Karuvūr, as it occurs there, may be explained as a descriptive name meaning simply the *prominent or impregnable city,* and need not be regarded as a proper noun. That the city which was known to the poets as Vañci and was celebrated by them under that name was not Karuvūr of the Trichinopoly district, also seems to be clear from *Agam* 263, where Karuvūr Kaṇṇampāḷanār sings of Vañci as the capital city of the Cēra. Obviously Vañci and Karuvūr in Trichinopoly were regarded as two different places.

This is also seen from another fact we gather from ancient Tamil literature. That the Karuvūr region enjoyed the unenviable distinction of having frequently been the cock-pit of the Tamil country is patent from ancient works. Kongu-nāḍu was originally under its independent chief; but it afterwards passed into the possession of the rulers of each of the three Tamil kingdoms. *Patiṟṟup-pattu*[7]

5 *Kaḷavaḻi,* St. 39.

6 *Agam,* 93.

7 *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* 22, 88 and 90.

shows that it once became subject to the Cēras. *Puṟam* 373 shows the territory had been conquered by the Cōḻas; and *Agam* 253 shows that the Pāṇḍyas had also brought it under their sway. A place in such a region would obviously be ill-suited for the metropolis of a flourishing kingdom like Cēra-nāḍu. *Puṟam* 5 is sung by a poet called Nariverūt-talaiyār in praise of a Cēra, whose name is given as Cēramān Karuvūr-ēṟiya-Oḷvāṭ-Kōpperum-Cēraḷ-Irumpoṟai. This Cēral Irumpoṟai must have *gone to reign at Karuvūr*, as his description signifies, from some other city which was the metropolis of the Cēra kingdom; and there can be no doubt that that city was Vañci. I have stated that the extensive conquests towards the north made by Udiyan Cēralātan, Imayavaramban and Palyānai-śel-keḻu-Kuṭṭuvan, the three earliest Cēra kings known to Tamil literature, necessitated the establishment of a viceroyalty at Karuvūr, which as frontier town was perhaps coveted as a key position; and this Cēral Irumpoṟai, apparently a junior member of the house, went there invested with palatine prerogatives about the close of Palyānai's reign. From that time, the Cēral Irumpoṟais of whom we read in literature probably occupied the position of Cēra viceroys of the north, with their seat of government at Toṇḍi, a sea-port town on the West coast; but the Cēra king himself had his capital at Vañci and not at Karuvūr. To avoid

all possibility of confusion from the use of the expression Karuvūr in the *Aganānūṛu* lyric already referred to, the early Tamil lexicons, *Pingalantai* and *Śēntan Divākaram* explain by a separate *sūtra*[8] that Karuvūr denotes Vañci. That *sūtra* was necessitated because of the occurrence of the unfamiliar word Karuvūr in a classical lyric; but, perhaps, owing to that very circumstance, later generations in course of time came to give the name Karuvūr the same currency as Vañci, little suspecting that it might lead long years afterwards to confusion.

Another fact that we gather from ancient Tamil classics may also be noticed here. Karuvūr of the Trichinopoly district is, as every one will admit, in what was known as Kongu-nāḍu and not in Malai-nāḍu. The third decad of *Patiṛṛup-pattu* is written by Pālai-gautamanār, in honour of Palyānai-śel-keḻu Kuṭṭuvan, the younger brother of Imaya-varamban-Neḍum-Cēralātan; and one of the poems in that section[9] tells us that the hero of that decad effected the conquest of Kongu-nāḍu. Clearly then, Karuvūr of the Trichinopoly District could not have been the original capital of the Cēras; for the Cēras, as we know from literature, had already, before the conquest of

8 *Pingala*, p. 86 and *Divākaram*, P. 62.

9 *Patiṛṛup-pattu*, 22.

Kongu-nāḍu, established their fame and power as a ruling dynasty in the Tamil country. Again, we gather from *Agam* 29 that Kāri, the chief of Mullūr, slew Ōri, the chief of Kolli-malai, and delivered it to the Cēra; but Paraṇar who has sung in honour of Śen-Kuṭṭuvan refers in *Agam* 208 to Ōri as still lord of the Kolli mountains. These circumstances will show that Koṅgu-nāḍu and the adjacent region did not belong to the Cēras originally, but they were acquired by them only later. All this clearly indicates that the capital of the Cēra kingdom, Vañci-mūtūr, lay elsewhere than in Karuvūr situate in Koṅgu-nāḍu.

S. 2.

Though Vañci and Karuvūr had come to be regarded as convertible terms, it did not, however, mean that, in the conception of the Tamil literary world, the capital of the Cēra kingdom was not Vañci in Malai-nāḍu, but was Karuvūr in Kongu-nāḍu. The commentators, who came several centuries after the Śangam period, when they explained Vañci as Karuvūr, took care also to state that it was not the Karuvūr of the Trichinopoly District. Thus Aḍiyārkku-nallār tells us that Vañci is Koḍuṅkōlūr;[10] and Mahāmahōpādhyāya Dr. V. Swaminatha Aiyar, to whom all lovers of

10 See P. 19 of the *Śilap.* (3rd ed.).

ancient Tamil literature owe an immense debt of endless gratitude, writes the warning note that Karuvūr, the capital of the Cēra, is the city in Malai-nāḍu and not the Karuvūr situate in Koṅgu-nāḍu.[11] Śēkkiḻār, the author of *Periya-purāṇam,* states clearly that Vañci is Koḍuṅkōlūr, and that Karuvūr in Koṅgu-nāḍu is a town of the Cōḻas.[12] The inscriptions found in the latter place are all Cōḻa inscriptions; and there is nothing in them or anywhere in literature that I know which attributes its origin and rise to the Cēras. When Tirujñāna-sambanda sang a hymn in praise of this place, he called it Karuvūr-ānilai, obviously to distinguish it from Karuvūr or Vañci of the Cēras in the West coast. Modern Tamil lexicons, e.g., *Abidhāna-cintāmaṇi,* explain that Vañci is Koḍunkōlūr near Cochin. It is the place that Sundaramūrti has in his Tēvāram, described as 'Āñcaikkaḷam, of which Makōdai on the sea-coast is the ornament,' and which in his day was the capital city of his royal friend, Cēramān Perumāl, the well-known Śaiva devotee. Makōdai or Muśiri in the sea-port in the delta of the Periyār, the Tiru-vañcāḻimukham of *Kēralōtpatti,* and is a part of the ancient royal city which Lakṣmi-Dāsa

11 *Maṇimēkalai,* pp. 190—1, 376.

12 *Tiruttoṇḍar Purāṇam, Veḻḷānai Śarukkam,* St. 28.

in his *Śukasaṁdēśa*[13] (*c.* 900 A.C.) calls Rājadhāni Mahōdayapuri, of which Tiruvañcikaḷam in the centre formed the royal residence. This ancient royal town extended from the bar at the coast to Tṛakaṇāmatilakam, about four miles inland north-eastward, the seat of a famous Śaiva shrine, now unfortunately destroyed, to which the temple at Guruvāyūr and other places were once subordinate. Another name for Tṛkaṇāmatilakam was Guṇapuri or Guṇaka apparently the Guṇavāyil of *Śilappadhikāram;* and in his description of the place, the author of the *Śukasaṁdēśa* employs in relation to the neighbourhood the expression *Kanakabhavana*[14] which reminds one of the

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13 *Śukasaṁdēśa* was published about 60 years ago by the late Viśākham Tirunāl Mahārāja of Travancore in the J.R.A.S. The references given in this book are to the edition of the Maṅgalōdayam Company, Trichur, in 1913. Śloka 68 describes Mahōdayapuri as follows:—

"उत्तीर्णस्तामुदधिदयितामुत्तरेण क्रमेथा
राजत्पतिद्विपहयरथानीकिनीं राजधानीम् ।
राज्ञामाज्ञानियमितनृणामाननैर्सूरिधाम्नां
राजा राजेत्यवनिवलये गीयते यन्निकेतः" ॥

Pūrvasaṁdēśa, Śl. 68 (p. 14).

14. "काम्याकल्पः कनकभवने यत्र चोल्कान्तसीम्नां
भङ्कुर्वन् जगति गुणकानाथ इत्यूढकीर्तिः ।
आस्त्ये गौरीकलहमनुशङ्केथव वेशाङ्गनानां
वीथीभिक्षाचरणविमुखश्चन्द्रलेखावतंसः ॥"

Uttarasaṁdēśa, Śl. 15 (p. 19)

Āḍaka-māḍam of *Śilappadhikāram*. It is interesting to note that, immediately to the north of Cranganore, the modern anglicized name for Koḍunkōlūr, and forming its approach from the backwater leading to Ernakulam, there is a place bearing the significant name of Karūr-paṭaṇa or as it is more generally called Karūr-paṭanam, meaning probably the salt pans of Karuvūr.[14a] It is only four or five miles north of Tiruvañcikaḷam and this fact suggests that for some reason not now obvious, Tiruvañcikaḷam had also come to be known as Karuvūr.

These considerations lend strong support to the view that Vañci is Tiruvañcikaḷam. In *Śilappadhikāram,* we read that Śen-Kuṭṭuvan left Vañci-muṟṟam to go to the forests. It will be seen that Vañci-muṟṟam and Vañci-kaḷam have the same meaning. Besides, it is seen from that epic that, when Śen-Kuṭṭuvan was about to start on his northern expedition, *prasādam* was brought to him from a neighbouring Viṣṇu temple situated at Āḍaka-māḍam which, according to the commentator was the temple at Trivandrum. or at Iravipuram. Trivandrum may be rejected as being far away; but Iravipuram was close to Tiruvañcikaḷam; for I am told that in a Malayalam Campu, *Nārāyanīyam,* (*c.* 1600) Tripunittura is called Ravigrāmam; and besides a portion of Ernakulam still bears the name Iravipuram. It

14a Or does it mean 'the port of Karuvūr'.

seems to me, however, that we need not travel even to Iravipuram for the temple; for as I have already stated, within the limits of Tṛkanāmatilakam was *Kanakabhavana,* though unfortunately the place is now in ruins. Besides, *Kēralōtpatti* mentions in more than one place a *pon-māḍam* in Tiru-Kāriyūr,[14b] a place close by, which the late Mr. Kanakasabhai attempted to identify with the Cēra capital.

S. 3.

It has, however, been objected to this identification that the name of the place near Cochin is properly Añcaik-kaḷam as that is the name which it bears in Sundarar's hymn.[15] No doubt, in Tamil Śaivite literature, Tiruañcaik-kaḷam is the consecrated name for the place; but I cannot regard this insignificant difference in spelling as a serious objection. Place-names often changed in form, owing to various reasons; and the change here by no means presents an insurmountable obstacle. In two Vaṭṭeḻuttu inscriptions found in the Śiva temple at Tiruvañcikkaḷam, the name of the place is written as Tiruvañcak-kāḷam. Is it not possible that by a pardonable mistake *va* may have been regarded as *a* transformed, owing to rules of liaison or *sandhi,* and *i* changed into *ai* innocently in pronunciation,

14b *Keraḷōt,* pp. 46–7. (1890 Ed. Mangalore).
15 VIIth *Tirumurai.*

or from false analogy? We know that there is a tendency for Tamil place-names to end in *ai* (c.f. Urantai, Karantai, Tañjai, Nellai, Anantai, Mailai, Kailai). Thus Tiruvañcik-kaḷam may have in course of time been unconsciously changed into Tiru-añcaik-kaḷam. However that be, the objection appears to me to be too trivial for serious consideration. It may also be noted that, in the inscriptions found in the Śiva temple at this place, the name of the deity is given as Vañculēśa.[16] For some reasons, which at this distance of time it is not possible to ascertain, Vañci, the ancient capital of the Cēras, also came to bear an alternative name Karuvūr; but, as stated above, it misled no Tamilian into believing that that Karuvūr was the town of that name in the Trichinopoly district. It may, perhaps, be that the alternative name of Karuvūr for Vañci was known even in the second century of the Christian era, as Ptolemy (circa 150 A.C.) mentions Karoura as the royal seat of Kerobothras. If there were evidence that, even in those early days, the name Koḍunkōlūr had become current, then we might posit that Ptolemy's Karoura had nothing to do with Karuvūr, but was a corruption of Kōlūr in Koḍunkōlūr. In the absence of such evidence, we may regard Karoura as a corruption of Karuvūr. Bishop Caldwell, influenced by the similarity of names, suggested the identification of Ptolemy's Karoura with

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16 Vide *Travancore Arch. Series,* VI, pp. 191–2.

"Karur, an important town in Coimbatore district originally included in the Cēra kingdom",[17] and this wrong lead which the learned bishop unwittingly gave has now been followed by some scholars, with what I am compelled to regard as misdirected zest. Possibly when he suggested the identification, Dr. Caldwell had momentarily forgotten that Pliny in his *Natural History* (before 77 A.C.) had mentioned Muziris as the capital of the Cēras. After stating that Muziris was "the first emporium of India", he said: "The station for ships is at a distance from the shore and cargoes have to be landed and shipped by means of little boats. There reigned there, when I wrote this, Coelobothros". A few years after Pliny, the Periplus (circa 89 A.C.) contained the statement that Musiris "a city at the height of prosperity", was "two miles distant from the mouth of the river on which it is situated" and was "the seat of Government of the kingdom under the sway of Keprobotras". From the language of the classical writers, there can be no doubt that the two places Karoura and Musiris were not regarded as essentially different. By Karoura Ptolemy denoted, perhaps, the interior where the Cēra's palace was, the present Tiruvañcik-kaḷam, while Muziris properly denoted Musiri or Makōdai, the commercial mart or port about a mile and a

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17 *Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages.*

half lower down at the mouth of the Periyār—the Pēriyāṟu of *Patiṟṟup-pattu*[18] or the Tiru-vañcāḷi-mukham of *Kēralōtpatti* and the Pseudostomos of the Greek writers. The same fact that Musiri is the Cēra's capital and sea-port is conveyed by *Puṟam* 343 where we read: "Sacks of pepper are brought from the houses to the market. The gold received from the ships in exchange for commodities sold is brought to the shore in barges at Musiri, where the roar of the surging sea never ceases and where Kuṭṭuvan presents the rare products of the sea and the mountains to those that visit him".

S. 4.

If Vañci is Koḍunkōlūr or Tiruvañcik-kaḷam, it must follow that the river Porunai or Ān-poruntam could not be the river Amarāvati as has been suggested by some, but should be the Periyār which falls into the sea on the southern side of Koḍunkōlūr. Kōṭṭaimukku, which is the site of an old fort at the north-eastern corner of Cranganore, is washed by the river Periyār on the south. The river is mentioned and described in *Patiṟṟup-pattu* as the most important of the rivers in the Cēra kingdom. That Vañci is on the bank of the Porunai river is patent from *Puṟanāṉūṟu*,[19] and *Śilappadhikāram*.[20] *Porunai* is apparently

18 Stanzas 28, 43, 88, *Agam,* 149, *Śilap.* etc.

19 Lyrics 11 and 387.

20 *Śilap.* canto. 29.

the Tamil variant Parṇi in Tāmra-parṇi, for which river it is the recognized name in classical Tamil; and according to the lexicons an alternative name for Porunai is Poruntam. Tāmṛaparṇi is, as is well known, a river of the Pāṇḍya kingdom flowing east-ward; and obviously to distinguish the Porunai of the Cēra country from the Porunai of the Pāṇḍya kingdom, the prefix *an* was sometimes added to the former. Thus we have *taṇ ām porunai* in *Puṛam* 36 and *Agam* 93, meaning, the cool *Ān-porunai*. These are the only two instances in old literature that I have come across, where the prefix appears. It has been suggested that in these instances *ān*, is perhaps, a mistake for *ār;* but it is, I think, a needless suggestion. The ancients may have thought that both the Tāmraparṇi and the Periyār had the same source; and, indeed, their sources are not far distant from each other.[21] They both rise, to use the words of Messrs. Ward and Connor, "in the Alpine chain of the peninsula separating the Tinnevelly district from Travancore"; and so both rivers come to bear the same name, Porunai; but to distinguish one from the other, the above particle was prefixed to the river in the west; and both *Pingalantai* and *Divākaram* mention a river Ānporuntam, besides Porunai

21 The Tāmraparṇi rises Agastya-malai, and the Periyār in Alitaimalai, probably the Ayirai-malai of the Śaṅgam works.

or Poruntam. I may state here that Lakshmi-Dāsa in his *Śukasaṁdēśa*[22] describes the river flowing near the Rājadhāni Māhōdayapuri as the sister of the Tāmraparṇi. After the manner of Kālidāsa, Lakshmi-Dāsa employs a parrot as messenger to take his message to his wife at Tṛkaṇāmatilakam or Guṇapuram. The expression occurring in the poem for the river is Cūrṇi. Perhaps it is a variant of Cuḷḷi-āṛu, which is another name for Periyār, found in Śangam literature; and there still exists a place called Cuḷḷi a few miles north of Kālaḍi. Or it is a mislection for Pūrṇa; for written in *grantha* characters, one may easily be mistaken for the other. I also learn that in *Śankara-Vijaya,* wrongly attributed to Vidyāraṇya, Kālaḍi the birth-place of Śri Śankara is said to be situate on the banks of the Pūrṇa river. This work, I am convinced, is spurious, being not more than a century old; but I refer to it only to show that in a Sanskrit work written very long before the present controversy arose the Periyār bears the name Pūrṇa. We may also note the evidence of Tirupūnatura or Tirupūrnaturai, the town situated on the holy Pūrṇa river. Tirupūnatura is the residence of the Mahārājas of Cochin.

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22 *Pūrvasaṁdēśa,* Śloka 65.

"सा चादूरे प्रवहति सरित् सोदरी ताम्रपर्ण्या-
श्चूर्णी माहोदयपुरवधूरोजचूर्णाङ्कितोर्मिः"

Op. cit. (p. 14).

Accepting Ānporunai or Ānporuntam as an approved literary name for the river on which Vañci is situate, we have still no warrant for taking those names to denote the Amarāvati river. The name Amarāvati is unknown to the Śangam poets, lexicographers, or the commentators. It is said that in *Karuvūr-Sthala Purānam,* a recent work by a comparatively unknown author, a line occurs in which Amarāvati is said to be otherwise known as Ānporunai; and on this statement found in a work of fancy or imagination, is rested the momentous conclusion that Ānporunai is Amarāvati. Another reason given is that *āmbhiram* means the mango tree; and as the *Pingalantai* gives *cūtam* as a name for Ānporuntam,[23] and as *cūtam* also means the mango tree, Amarāvati and Ānporunai are identical! I may add in passing that *Divākaram* does not mention *Cūtam* as one of the names of Ānporuntam. All the lexicons—*Pingalantai, Divākaram* and *Cūḍāmaṇi*—agree in mentioning Āni-vāni as a name for Ānporuntam; but it is significant that Amarāvati is not mentioned anywhere as an alternative name.

We thus see that the evidence alike of ancient and medieval Tamil literature, of ancient Cēra history and of approved and long established Tamil tradition points to the

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23 Ch. IV, P. 99.

conclusion that Vañci is Tiru-Vañcikaḷam or Koḍum-kōlūr; and the recent attempt to unsettle this view by drawing a red herring across the track is, it seems to me, gratuitous.

CHAPTER VII

The Date of the Śangam Epoch.

S. 1.

What is the approximate date of the Śangam period? The question has proved to be one of the greatest puzzles of South Indian chronology, if we are to judge by the bewildering diversity of answers given to it. Indeed, one cannot help thinking that the methods of investigation that have been pursued must have been vitiated by some radical defect, when one notices that all possible dates from before the first to the tenth century after Christ have been assigned with greater or less confidence to the Śangam period. For example, the *Encyclopædia Britannica* informs us that the 'Augustan age of Tamil literature,' as the late Dr. Caldwell called this period, is to be placed somewhere between the ninth or tenth century and the thirteenth century A.C. Mr. L. D. Swamikannu Pillai and the officers of the Madras Archæological department tell us that we should seek for the Śangam period in the seventh or eighth century A.C. Pandit Raghava Aiyangar of the Tamil Lexicon Office has attempted to place the Śangam period in the fifth century A.C. Other scholars, of whom I may particularly mention the late Mr. Kanakasabhai Pillai, Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, and Mr. Srinivasa Pillai of Tanjore,[1]

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1 *Tamil Varalāru* in 2 Vols.

have maintained that the Śangam period should be sought for in the second century A.C. There are yet others who would look for the Śangam period before the Christian era. The expounders of every one of these views are scholars of proved ability and established reputation; but obviously all of them cannot be right, and possibly all of them may be wrong. Each one has attempted to carry on research along his own line, and to state results independently of others; and everybody knows that the pursuit of special lines of investigation easily tends to beget prejudices, and in the statement of results it is not always easy to avoid the fallacies due to individual prepossessions.

In examining the various answers returned to the question, we should remember that a hypothesis, however high the authority for it, can have no significance, if it has no real connection with the facts which it is supposed to explain. Nor can the validity of a hypothesis be inferred from its agreement with a single fact alone. It is a rule of inductive logic that a hypothesis is valid in proportion to the number and variety of facts which it is able to explain. In other words, the guarantee for the validity of a hypothesis consists in the consilience of results. A hypothesis may be accepted as reasonably established, when a number of independent facts point towards it as the one conception fitted to bring them all into intelligible relation. It will be my attempt

here to test the various dates that have been advanced, and see how far they satisfy this rule.

S. 2. *The Ninth or the Tenth Century Theory.*

In spite of the high authority of the *Encyclopædia Britannica,* the view there expressed may be rejected as obsolete. That view was first stated about a century ago by the Rev. Dr. Caldwell, when the materials for the investigation of the problem were extremely scanty. In his article in the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Brittannica,* Dr. Rost repeated that view: and that article has been bodily reproduced in the eleventh edition of that work. When Dr. Rost wrote his article, the old Śangam works, excepting the immortal Kuṛaḷ, had not been made available in print; but since then, many of the Śangam works have been published, and much valuable research has been made; and it is strange that the literary and historical material since brought to light has been totally ignored by the editors of the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica.* How far out of focus is the date given in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* will be patent if we remember that upon that view the Śangam age will be posterior by several centuries to the earlier Śaiva hymnists, Jñānasambandar and Appar, who were the contemporaries of the great Pallava Narasimha I, the destroyer of Vātāpi. The

late Prof. Sundaram Pillai of Trivandrum thoroughly exposed the unsustainability of this hypothesis in his "*Some Mile-stones in Tamil Literature*"[2]; and one can only express one's wonder, not unmixed with pain, that the error should still persist, and find its way into some works, intended to be of authority, like Frazer's *Literary History of India* and the *Imperial Gazetteer of India.*

S. 3. *The Seventh or the Eighth Century Theory.*

If the view expressed in the *Encyclopœdia Britannica* may be summarily dismissed as out of date, the view expressed by Mr. Swamikannu Pillai cannot be dealt with so easily. He is a recognized authority on astronomical calculation; and it is with his assistance that the dates of many of the South Indian kings mentioned in inscriptions have been determined. The service that he has done to South Indian chronology is incalculable; and naturally, therefore, a date fixed by him as the result of astronomical calculation will *prima facie* command acceptance. And when to his personal authority, which is deservedly high, is added the fact that his date has won ready acceptance among the experts of the Government Archæological department and some other scholars, his view would appear to be too well entrenched

2 Published in the *Madras College Magazine.* Republished in the *Tamilian Antiquary* now defunct.

to be easily assailed. From certain astronomical data found in *Śilappadhikāram* and the eleventh *Paripāḍal,* both Śangam works, he tells us[3] that the former work cannot be anterior to 23rd July 756, and the latter must have been written after 17th June 634. The startling definiteness of the dates arrests attention, and tempts, not to say compels, acceptance. 'To beard the lion in his den, the Douglas in his hall' were, perhaps, less hazardous than to oppose Mr. Swamikannu Pillai on the question of an Indian date which he has fixed by calculation; nevertheless, with due deference, I venture to state that his dates in this matter cannot be accepted. To place the Śangam period between the middle of the seventh and the middle of the eighth century would be to ignore altogether the political condition of Tamil India as depicted in the Śangam works, and of the rest of India in that period as now known to us. From the time of Simhavishṇu (*c.* 575—600 A.C.) the Pallava supremacy was the most outstanding fact of South Indian history for nearly three centuries. The period indicated by Mr. Swamikannu Pillai is covered by the reigns of, among others, Mahēndra Varman I, Narasimhavarman I, Paramēśvara-varman I, Narasimhavarman II, and Nandi Varman II, all Pallavas of Kāñci; and during this period of Pallava domination, the Cēras and Cōḷas and to some extent

3 *The Indian Ephemeris,* Vol. I, pp. 100–109.

the Pāṇḍyas did not count for anything practically. The Śangam works make no reference to the Pallavas at all; not one Pallava king, great or insignificant, is even casually mentioned in those works. On the other hand, a large number of Cēras, Cōḷas and Pāṇḍyas, with names some of which may be regarded as unpronounceable and almost forbidding, and many feudatory chiefs under them are sung about by the Śangam poets.

It is significant that not one Pāṇḍya or Cōḷa king of the seventh or eighth century whom the inscriptions have brought to light is referred to in the Śangam works, while they belaud the prowess and munificence of a host of kings and chieftains that ruled and exercised authority over the Tamil kingdoms. No one would have the temerity to say that the Tamil kings and their achievements detailed in the Śangam works could be made to fit into the epoch of the Pallava ascendancy. These rulers must necessarily belong to a prior age. About the middle of the seventh century the Pāṇḍya king of Madura was Kūn Pāṇḍya *alias* Ninṟaśīr Neḍu-Māṟan, and the Pallava king of Kāñci was Narasimha Varma I; while about the middle of the eighth century, the Pāṇḍya and the Pallava kings were respectively Jaṭila Neḍuñjaḍaiyan Parāntaka, the donor of the Vēlvikuḍi grant, and the well-known Nandivarman Pallava Malla. The Vēḷvikuḍi plates, the text of which was first published

by Mr. K. G. Sankar, in the *Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society,* Bangalore, mention the Pāṇḍyan Mutu Kuḍumi of the Śangam period as a remote ancestor of Ninṛaśīr Neḍu-Māṛan or as he is called in the grant, Māṛa Varman the victor at Nelvēli. This Neḍu-Māṛan was converted to Śaivism by Jñānasambanda, whose date is now definitely settled. Jñānasambanda and his elder contemporary Appar, who is said to have converted to Śaivism the Pallava Mahēndra Varman, son of Narasimha I, have in their *Tēvāram* hymns referred to the Cōḷa king Śen-Kaṇṇān, with reverential devotion; and it is seen from the references that by the time of the two hymnists, a hoary and consecrated legend had become woven about the name of that Cōḷa monarch. Dr. Hultzsch thinks that even at the time of the earliest of the dynastic Cōḷas brought to light by epigraphical research, Śen-Kaṇṇān must have been only a name; and we see from the Tiruvālangāḍu plates[4] of Rājēndra Cōḷa I, that Karikāla Cōḷa 'of extensive glory' was an ancestor of the 'emperor' Kō-Śen-Kaṇṇān. All this indisputably shows that we should seek for the Tamil kings of the Śangam era long before the middle of the seventh century.

Besides, as already stated, the middle of the seventh century coincides with the date of

4 *S.I.I.*, Vol. III, Pt. III

Jñānasambanda and Appar, and their royal disciples Ninṛaśīr Neḍu-Māṛan and Mahēndra Varman. Those were the days when the Jains were most mercilessly persecuted both in the Pāṇḍya and the Pallava country. It is difficult to believe that it was during this period of bitter persecution, that the growth of classical Tamil literature went on apace, mainly under Jain auspices; for everybody conversant with Śangam literature knows to what great extent we are indebted to the Jains in that respect. The Śangam age witnessed a predominance of the Jains in Tamil letters. The author of *Śilappadhikāram* was a Jain; while his brother, the Cēra King, Śen-Kuṭṭuvan, was a Śaivite. It is patent that there was then perfect religious toleration, and the differences in religious belief did not break asunder the bonds of family; much less did they affect the amenities of social life. Again to look for the Śangam period in the seventh and the eighth centuries will be to regard the Śangam poets as contemporaries of the Śaiva hymnists and the Vaiṣṇava Āḷvārs; and to do so would be to ignore the evidence supplied by the language, matter and verse-form and metre employed in the works of the Śangam and the hymnal period respectively.

Apart from the historical difficulties noticed above, it has also been shown that none of the dates supplied by Mr. Swamikannu Pillai can really be obtained from the astronomical

data given in *Śilappadhikāram* and *Paripāḍal.* In a paper on '*The Date of Śilappadhikāram*' which I published in 1917 in the *Madras Christian College Magazine,* I showed that in spite of Mr. Swamikannu Pillai's emphatic statement that 756 A.C. satisfies all the astronomical conditions mentioned in *Śilappadhikāram,* not even one condition could, without very material alteration, be made to apply to that year. Similarly, in regard to 634 A.C. which that distinguished scholar has arrived at from astronomical data found in XI *Paripāḍal,* Mr. S. Somasundara Desikar of Tiruarur has examined its correctness in a series of articles contributed by him to *Śen Tamil,*[5] the organ of the Madura Tamil Śangam, and demonstrated its inaccuracy. Mr. K. G. Sankar, in a learned contribution to the *Journal of Oriental Research,*[6] has shown that on 27th July 17 A.C. the major planets were exactly in the positions attributed to them in the *Paripāḍal* text and there was also coincidence of lunar eclipse and Agastyōdayam, as required by the text.

Mr. Swamikannu Pillai seeks support for his date from the mention of a week-day—Friday—in *Śilappadhikāram*[7]; and there are others who say that the mention of solar signs in *Paripāḍal* and in *Maṇimēkalai* prove that they are late works. I have dealt with this

5 Vol. 20, pp. 182–188; *Ib.* 22, pp. 301 *ff.*
6 *J.O.R.,* IX, pp. 148–155.
7 Canto XXIII, l. 135.

subject elsewhere in some detail.[8] The argument is that India borrowed the planetary week-days and the solar signs from the Greeks at some time not earlier than the fifth century after Christ. It is said that the earliest known genuine instance of the use of a planetary week-day is afforded only by the Eran inscription of Budha-Gupta, which has been assigned by Dr. Fleet to 484 A.C.; and according to that great authority, there was no general practice of using the planetary names of days till the eighth century. From this it is argued that the composition of *Śilappadhikāram* may be as late as the eighth or the ninth century. In Vol. III of Dr. Fleet's *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum,* which contains the inscriptions of the early Guptas and their successors, besides the Eran inscription, there are only two other inscriptions, the Verawal inscriptions of 1246 and 1264, that mention a planetary week-day; would we be justified in saying from this that till the middle of the thirteenth century the people in the regions of the early Guptas and their successors were not familiar with the use of planetary week-days? As a matter of fact, the planetary week-days seem to have been known in India centuries before the fifth century. The expression *Vāra,* which imports a regulated division of the month, occurs in *Atharva*

8 Vide *The Date of Śilap.,* (Madras Christian Magazine, Sep. 1917); *Solar Signs in Indian Literature,* (Q.J.M.S., 1922).

Jyotisha. In *Paithāmaha Samhitā*, which is said to be of the same type as *Vedānga Jyotisha*,[9] Tuesday is said to occur. In *Gāthāsaptasati*, which is attributed to Hāla Śātavāhana, and which Sir R. G. Bhandarkar thinks was either written by Hāla or was dedicated to him, we come across *Angārakavāra* (Tuesday). We have to place Hāla probably in the closing years of the first century B.C. or the opening years of the first century A.C. Āryadēva (*c.* second century) employs week-days. The *Hitopadēśa* mentions *Bhaṭṭāraka vāra* or Sunday. In the *Vaikhānasa Dharmasūtra* (*c.* third century) *Budhavāra* or Wednesday is mentioned. Yājñavalkya mentions planetary days. The *Matsya Purāṇa*, which is regarded as the earliest of the *Purāṇas*, is not only cognizant of the planetary week, but also deals with astral theology, for a chapter is devoted to the worship of the Sun on *Ādityavāra*.[10]

In southern India, Tiruvaḷḷuvar, who is considerably anterior in date to the authors of *Śilappadhikāram* and *Maṇimēkalai*, has a couplet in his *Kuṛaḷ*[11] which indicates the adoption of the seven-day week. One of Jñānasambanda's *patigams* in the *Tēvāram* collection mentions all the days of the week in their

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9 Now published by Dr. R. Shama Sastri in the *Mysore Government Series*.

10 Ch. 70.46; Ch. 253.7.

11 நெருநற்று சென்றாரெங் காதலர் யாமு
மெழுநாளே மேனி பசந்து *Kuṛal*, 1278.

order;[12] and it is clear from that passage that in the minds of the people each day of the week had a well-understood beneficent or malignant influence associated with it. As regards the solar sign, Baudhāyana, whom Prof. A. B. Keith places in the fifth century B.C., and Āryadēva (*c.* second century A.C.) mention the zodiacal signs; and so do also some of the Smṛtis. Even supposing that the planetary names of the week-days and the solar zodiac were borrowed by India from elsewhere, literary evidence shows that it must have been long before the fifth century of the Christian era. It has been conclusively established that there was extensive intercourse and traffic between India and Babylonia and Assyria; and the recent discoveries at Harappa in the Punjab and at Mohenjo-Daro in Sind, prove the existence in India in the remote past of a civilization and culture closely akin to those of the Sumerians. The borrowing, if indeed there was a borrowing, may well have been from the Babylonian or Chaldean astrologers direct; and that is the view of the late Shankar Balakrishna Dikshit. In any event, India need not have waited till the fifth century A.C. to borrow this knowledge. Indeed Dr. Fleet himself practically concedes this when he admits in his article on Hindu chronology in the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* that

12 வேயுறுதோளி *Patigam.* ஞாயிறு திங்கள் செவ்வாய் புதன் வியாழம் வெள்ளி சனி பாம்பிரண்டு முடனே யாசறு நல்ல நல்லவவை நல்ல நல்ல வடியார்க்கு மிகவே

some of the astronomical books perhaps postulate an earlier knowledge of 'the lords of the days', and other writings indicate a still earlier use of the period of seven days.[13]

S. 4. *The Fifth Century Theory.*

The fifth century has been suggested as the date of the Tamil Śangam by Pandit M. Raghava Aiyangar in his scholarly monograph on *Cēran Śen-Kuṭṭuvan.* His argument has been largely influenced by a mislection of the Samudragupta inscription on the Aśoka Pillar at Allahabad, for which Dr. Fleet was originally responsible. The text of the inscription as published by Dr. Fleet contained the words Kauralaka-Mantarāja, and Dr. Fleet thought that Kauralaka must be a mistake for Kairalaka, and he translated the expression as Mantarāja of Keraḷa. Following this interpretation, the learned Pandit cast about to discover what he thought was confirmation in Tamil literature of Samudragupta's supposed invasion of the Kerala kingdom. He equated Mantarāja with Māntaram Cēral of Śangam literature, and noticing in an *Ahanānūṛu* lyric reference to a military expedition by *Vampa Mōriyar*[14] he stated that the expression *Vampa Mōriyar* meant the 'new Mauryas' or Guptas. Unfortunately for this reasoning, Dr. Kielhorn,

13 See also my 'Solar Signs in Indian Literature' (*Q.J.M.S.*, 1922).

14 *Ahām*, 251.

in studying the Aihole inscription, identified *Kunala* therein mentioned with the *'Kaurala'* of the Allahabad inscription, and pointed out that Kaurala was a misreading. The proper rendering of the passage was settled by Dr. Kielhorn and Dr. Fleet in 1898; and it is now understood by all that the reference in the Allahabad inscription is to Samudragupta's victory over the king who was reigning over the region round Kollera or Colair lake. Nobody has yet claimed for Samudragupta conquest of any territory, south of Kāñci; and Professor J. Dubreuil is of the definite opinion that Samudragupta did not advance south of the Krishna. However, this reasoning has now been given up by the learned Pandit, as in the second edition of his *Cēran Śen-Kuṭṭuvan,* he has omitted his arguments based on *Vampa Mōriyar.*[15]

Some have sought to make out that Śangam literature cannot have been anterior to the fifth century, as *Maṇimēkalai* makes a reference to the Gurjaras. The expression *Kuccara Kuḍigai*[16] occurs in *Maṇimēkalai* but in my view it has been wrongly interpreted to mean 'a building in the achitectural style of the Gurjaras'. I understand the expression to mean 'a hut fashioned

15 Vide my article on *The Kośar and the Vamba Mōriyar,* (*Q.J.M.S.*, 1924).

16 Canto XVIII, l. 145.

or cut in a rock', 'a rock-cave'; *Kuccara* being a corrupt form of *Kudhra* (कुध्र) a rock. The context seems to leave no room for doubt that this is the meaning. Prince Udayakumaran, in spite of Maṇimēkalai having become a Buddhist nun, lecherously seeks her in a *dharmaśāla* where she was serving food to the poor. She at once suspects him, and entering an inner apartment transforms herself with the help of a *mantra* into a strange lady, and then comes out. The prince does not recognize her, and after a vain search in the inner apartment, leaves the place. It is to denote this inner apartment that the expression *Kuccara Kuḍigai* is employed in the poem.[17]

It has also been sought to make out that canto 29 of *Maṇimēkalai* shows that, that work must have been written after Dinnāga; but this view has been successfully controverted by Professors S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri,[18] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri[19] and S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar.[20]

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17 Vide my article "The Gurjaras and Maṇimēkalai", X, *Q.J.M.S.*, 186.

18 *J.I.H.*, VIII, 322 sqq.

19 *Cōḻas*, I, p. 72.

20 *Intro.* to his *Maṇimēkalai in its Historical Setting. Vide* also my article on the *Date of Maṇimēkalai* in *J.O.R.*, Vol. iii. There is a comparative study of great erudition under the title *Niyāyap-piravēśa and Maṇimēkalai*, published as a serial by Pandit Tirunārāyana Iyangar, the learned Editor of *Śen Tamiḻ*, in Vols. XXXII and XXXIII of the Journal.

S. 5. *The Second Century Theory.*

The theory that assigns the Śangam epoch to the second century A.C. falls next to be considered; and if it explains, as I shall presently show it does, facts gatherable from the Śangam writings in such manner as no other date so far considered does, no *a priori* consideration of the remoteness of the date should deter us from accepting it. I have already referred to the astronomical data found in two of the Śangam works; and there is no reason to suppose that the authors of those works were only romancing when they mentioned those data. Taking the astronomical details found in *Śilappadhikāram,* I have pointed out in my paper[21] on the "*Date of Śilappadhikāram*" that 171 A.C. will thoroughly satisfy the conditions in the text for the great fire that consumed Madura. In 171 A.C. Āḍi twenty-sixth was Friday; Kṛṣṇa Saptami ended and Aṣṭami began 25 gh. 43 p. after sunrise, and Bharaṇi star ended and Kārtigai began at 49 gh. 57 p. after sunrise. Thus twenty-sixth Āḍi 171 A.C. will fit in exactly for the fire at Madura; and if 171 be accepted as the date of the fire, then Śen-Kuṭṭuva Cēra must be taken to be living at that time. Let us see if this hypothesis will satisfy other facts relevant to our inquiry. Śangam literature discloses that when Śen-Kuṭṭuvan was reigning, Musiri was a flourishing

21 Op. cit., *Madras Christian College Magazine,* 1917.

seaport, frequented by foreign ships. Pliny, who wrote his geography about 80 A.C., says that Musiri was unsafe for ships to call at, owing to the existence of pirates; but apparently that danger had ceased to exist by the time of Ptolemy who died about 161 A.C.; for he speaks of that seaport as a great emporium, which it certainly was in Śen-Kuṭṭuvan's time. Śen-Kuṭṭuvan was a king of great prowess; and one of the titled names Kaḍalōṭṭia Vēl-Keḷu-Kuṭṭuvan or Kaḍal-pirakkōṭṭia-Śen-Kuṭṭuvan, by which Śangam poets refer to him is reminiscent of a decisive naval engagement, which, perhaps, resulted as already opined in driving away the pirates from the coast.

Again the value of synchronisms in fixing dates in Indian history is well known; and the matter contained in *Śilappadhikāram* affords scope for several applications of that method. That epic recounts that Śen-Kuṭṭuvan went on an expedition to North India, in which he was assisted by his ally Nūṟṟavar Kannar, that on that occasion he fought a battle on the banks of the Ganges, where he was opposed by the combined army of certain "Aryan" princes, among whom Vijaya, son of Balakumara, Rudra and others are mentioned; and that, after defeating the allied Aryan forces he returned with a slab of stone from the trans-Gangetic region for fashioning the image of Kaṇṇaki—the *pattini-dēvi* or wife-goddess—which he intended to consecrate in a temple

to be built in her memory and honour. At the consecration which the author of the poem attended, the epic tells us that kings of various countries were present, and among them was Gayabāhu, king of Ceylon; and Gayabāhu, on returning to his country, ordered the erection of a shrine in honour of *pattini-dēvi* and ordained the annual celebration of a festival for her in the month of Āḍi. Now, nobody will question that for an invasion of the north by the Cēra King, the political condition not only in the other Tamil kingdoms but also outside Tamil India should be exceptionally weak and perturbed; and if we examine the political history of ancient India, there seem to be, so far as the materials now available go, only two or three periods when the Tamils could have marched into North India with any degree of success.

Going not further back than the third century B.C., we can state definitely that such an invasion could not have been possible in the times of Chandragupta Maurya, Bindusāra and Aśoka. It could not have occurred in Pushyamitra's time. It could have taken place between Aśoka's death and Pushyamitra's accession, perhaps; that is between 234 and 184 B.C. The period of the later Śungas appears to have been one of confusion; but the Śātavāhanas or Śātakarṇis were already attempting to become powerful, and by the close of the first

century B.C., they seem to have supplanted the Kaṇvas, and in the early years of the second century A.C. Gautamiputra Śri Śātakarṇi is seen from the Nasik inscription[22] to have succeeded in defeating the Kṣaharatas and annexing their territory. So another date for the northern invasion might be found, after Pushyamitra's long and eventful reign, possibly in the disturbed and confused period of the later Śungas and Kaṇvas, that is between *c.* 148 B.C. and the closing years of the first century B.C., provided the Andhras or Śātavāhanas would have presented no obstacle. After Gautamiputra Śri Śātakarṇi (*c.* 109 to *c.* 135 A.C.) came Pulumāyi who is said to have reigned for about thirty years. He came into collision with Rudradāman I, the Śaka Satrap of Ujjain, who took from him most of the territory which Gautamiputra Śri Śātakarṇi had won from the Kṣaharatas (Girnar inscription); but Gautamiputra Yajña Śri (*c.* 173 to 202 A.C.) seems to have again defeated the western Satraps and recovered some of the lost provinces. Rudradāman's aggrandizement is held to have been about 150 A.C. and perhaps, between that date and the date of Yajña Śri's accession, the Śātavāhanas were not powerful and could not have successfully opposed a southern army in its northward march. With the close of Yajña Śrī's reign, we enter on the third century

22 *Ep. Ind.*, VIII, p. 61.

which, in the words of Mr. Vincent Smith,[23] "is one of the dark spaces in the spectrum of Indian history, and almost every event of that time is concealed from view by an impenetrable veil of oblivion". In this dark century too an invasion of North India might have taken place.

The fourth and the fifth century of the Christian era is the well-known period of the mighty imperial Guptas; and as Dr. Jouveau Dubreuil observes, in his *Ancient History of the Deccan,* the fifth century is the century of the Vākāṭaka dynasty,[24] which, the learned doctor affirms, is the most glorious and the most important of the dynasties of the Deccan between the third and the sixth century. By the sixth century we are in the period of the powerful Pallavas and Chālukyas who, till the latter were overthrown by the Rāshtrakūṭas in 753 A.C., were striving against each other for the mastery of the South. It is clear that the political conditions in the fourth and the succeeding four centuries so far as now known were not at all favourable to an attempt by a Cēra king to invade Northern India; and there is no need to pursue our analysis further. Now if the fire at Madura occurred in August 171 A.C., and therefore Śen-Kuṭṭuvan was ruling then, how would it

23 *Early History of India* (1924), p. 226.

24 See Ch. IV. A reference in this connection may be made with profit to K. P. Jayaswal's *History of India.*

agree with the political situation we have been examining? The poem tells us that Śen-Kuṭṭuvan started on his northern expedition on hearing of Kaṇṇaki's apotheosis after the fire, and after he had ascertained through his spies that Nūṟṟuvar Kannar had promised to assist him and desired to maintain friendly relations with him. Nūṟṟuvar Kannar can be no other than Śātakarṇi; and we may conclude that Śen-Kuṭṭuvan and Śātakarṇi entered into a treaty for mutual assistance.

We learn from the poem that Śen-Kuṭṭuvan had been away from his state for thirty-two months, when he was on the bank of the Ganges. We may consequently suppose that about the beginning of 175 A.C. the Cēra king was occupying the bank of the Ganges. This synchronizes with the period when Yajña Śri Śātakarṇi would have been seeking the aid of a friendly power to regain from the Satraps the territory lost by his ancestor Pulumāyi. Thus if we hold that Śen-Kuṭṭuvan was, during a portion of his long reign, contemporaneous with Yajña Śri, we will be able to explain satisfactorily his northern invasion, which, while it served the Cēra's object, must also have afforded material assistance to the Śātakarṇi in vanquishing the Satrap. We are told that at the battle of the Ganges, several northern princes were ranged against Śen-Kuṭṭuvan and his ally; and one of the opposing princes was Vijaya, son of Bālakumāra. I suggest that

Bālakumāra is Ptolemy's Baleokouros. I know that it has been suggested by some historians that Baleokouros was probably one of the Śātavāhanas. The surmise may be unfounded; but there can be no doubt that he was historically connected with the Śātavāhanas; and as Ptolemy mentions him in his geography as a contemporary ruling prince, he must have been in existence before 160 A.C. His son may well have been among the princes that opposed Śen-Kuṭṭuvan at the battle of the Ganges. Yajña Śri himself was according to the *Matsyapurāṇa*[25] succeeded by a Vijaya; but it is not stated how they were related. Can that Vijaya be the Vijaya mentioned in *Śilappadhikāram;* and if so, was he an usurper, or did he come of a collateral line to which, perhaps, Baleokouros or Bālakumāra belonged? Then, another of the princes that Śen-Kuṭṭuvan defeated at the battle of the Ganges was Rudra; and about this time we have Rudrasimha, if not also Rudrasena of the Satraps, from whom Yajña Śrī must have recovered his lost territory. My suggestion is that the battle of the Ganges was fought by Yajña Śri and his ally against the forces of the Satraps and their allies.

There is also another important synchronism that has to be considered; for, *Śilappadhikāram* informs us that among the various kings

25 Ch. 273, 15.

that attended the consecration of the image of *Pattini-dēvi*, Gajabāhu, the king of Ceylon, was one. According to the *Mahāvamsa*, Gajabāhu was reigning between A.C. 173 and 191. The *Rājavali* says that Gajabāhu took with him some relics of Pattini-dēvi to Ceylon; and this lends material corroboration to the statement in the poem that on his return Gajabāhu ordered a shrine to be constructed and an annual festival to be celebrated in his dominion in honour of Pattini-Kaḍavuḷ or Pattini-dēvi. This account enables us to explain the hold that the tradition of Pattini-dēvi, the 'wife-goddess', has long had on the people of Ceylon, where as Dr. A. K. Commaraswamy observes[26] some of the images in temples that depict the old art of that island are those of the apotheosised wife.

S. 6. *Conclusion.*

Thus we see that 171 A.C. as the date of the fire at Madura satisfies the test afforded by a consilience of results; and we may therefore reasonably conclude that Śen-Kuṭṭuvan who was then the king of the Cēra kingdom must be assigned to the second century A.C.; and as according to *Śilappadhikāram* he had been fifty years on the throne when he built and consecrated the temple of Pattini-dēvi, his reign must have begun in the first quarter of that century. It may be noted that the remarkable

26 *J.R.A.S.*, 1909, p. 292.

concurrence of testimony between Sangam works and the *Periplus* on the conditions of maritime trade in the Indian seas considerably strengthens this conclusion. The latest attempt to determine the chronology of the Śangam is by Mr. K. N. Sivaraja Pillai, sometime senior lecturer in Tamil in the University of Madras, in his recent book *The Chronology of the Early Tamils.*[27] Mr. Sivaraja Pillai has scant faith in the historical sense of those who have worked on the basis of the Śen-Kuṭṭuvan-Gajabāhu synchronism, because forsooth *Śilappadhikāram* and *Mahāvamśa,* are likely to twist and pervert historical facts as the result of artistic and religious motives.

I have always held that the Śen-Kuṭṭuvan-Gajabāhu synchronism cannot be lightly rejected, simply because these two works are not professedly works of secular history. Such rejection of relevant evidence on *a priori* grounds is not sound; and the scientific inquirer must be prepared to accept light from whatever source it may proceed. The value of synchronism in fixing dates in early Indian history is well known. I cannot reject the Śen-Kuṭṭuvan-Gajabāhu synchronism as fanciful. Gajabāhu is seen to have been reigning between 173 and 195 A.C.; and we may reasonably postulate that the building and consecration of the temple was

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27 Published in 1932.

about 176 A.C. As Śen-Kuṭṭuvan had been on the throne for 50 years when he built the temple, he may be held to have ascended the throne about 125 A.C. In our present state of knowledge, I have no hesitation in regarding this as the 'sheet anchor' of early South Indian history; and I am strengthened in this view by the result arrived at by Mr. Sivaraja Pillai, who had conducted the inquiry along lines which he claims to be more reliable and less objectionable. I have already stated that Śen-Kuṭṭuvan helped Nalam-Kiḷḷi-Śēṭ-Cenni to gain the throne of the Cōḷa kingdom; and the synchronistic table accompanying Mr. Pillai's book assigns this Cōḷa to the period 100 to 125 A.C. Śēṭ-Cenni's period may as well be 125 to 150 A.C., for Mr. Pillai's date is only conjectural, after all. When we remember that in that table the conventional 25 years' period for each king is what is adopted, the coincidence between our results will be admitted to be remarkable. As the Śangam period did not obviously begin and close with the reign of Śen-Kuṭṭuvan, but there were several generations of kings and poets of the Śangam age both before and after him, we may for the present hold as a safe hypothesis that the Śangam epoch covered the first three centuries of the Christian era. This is the view I have all along maintained; and this is the considered conclusion of the late

Mr. Kanakasabhai. This is also the view adopted by Dr. Krishnaswami Aiyangar and Prof. Nilakanta Sastri in their works and in the *Cambridge History of India.*[28]

28 See also Dikshitar, *Studies in Tamil Literature and History*, Ch. I.

CHAPTER VIII.

Chronology of the Śangam Cēras.

I propose to take 125 A.C. as the first year of Śen-Kuṭṭuvan's reign, and with that as the starting point ascertain, with the help of the materials at our disposal, the dates of Śen-Kuṭṭuvan's predecessors and successors.

According to *Patirrup-pattu,* the following kings had, before Śen-Kuṭṭuvan, reigned for the period mentioned against each.

Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātan	58 years.
Palyānai Śelkeḻu-Kuṭṭuvan	25 years.
Kaḷankāi-kaṇṇi Nārmuḍiccēral	25 years.

So, counting back from 125 A.C., the year when Śen-Kuṭṭuvan's reign commenced, we see Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātan must have begun his reign in *c.* 17 A.C., Palyānai Śelkeḻu-Kuṭṭuvan in *c.* 75 A.C. and Kaḷankāik-kaṇṇi Nārmuḍiccēral in *c.* 100 A.C.; and if we, for the present, assign to Vānavaramban Udiyan-Cēralātan the conventional 25 years, which cannot, having regard to the character of his reign, be held to be an exaggerated estimate, that king must on this basis be regarded as commencing his reign in about 8 B.C. It must be confessed that the acceptance of these terms of years does present some difficulty. It may be asked: If Imayavaramban reigned for fifty-eight years, at what

age did his brother become king after him? Palyānai Śelkeḷu-Kuṭṭuvan must be at least about 60 when his reign commenced; and his age must have been 85 when he passed away. Such ripe old age may be uncommon, but is certainly not unknown, as a reference to Kushana, Gupta and Pallava history will show. For instance, Kuzulo Kadphises ruled for nearly 55 years,[1] and was over eighty, when he died and was succeeded by his son Wima Kadphises who reigned for 30 years;[2] and after him followed the great Kaniṣka whose reign covered not less than 45 years. Nandi-Varman Pallavamalla reigned for nearly sixty-five years (715-780 A.C.) and his son Dantivarman, who succeeded him, reigned for fifty years (780-830).[3] In recent history, we may instance William I who became King of Prussia in his 64th year and Emperor of Germany in his 74th year and lived to be 91 years old. The Ex-German Emperor William II, who ascended the throne in 1888, is now 76 years old. Frederick the Great of Prussia reigned for 46 years, and was 74, when he died. Queen Victoria reigned for 64 years and was 82 when she passed away. Edward VII succeeded her, when he was about 60 years of age; and George V, the Silver Jubilee of whose reign was celebrated

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1 Rapson's *Ancient India*, p. 185.

2 Sten Konow, *I.H.Q.*, III.

3 *Cambridge Shorter History of India.*

last year, passed away in his 71st year. The advanced age of Palyānai Śelkeḻu-Kuṭṭuvan need not present any difficulty, and it would afford another very cogent reason for the institution of a viceroyalty in the northern province during his reign.

There is another difficulty which we cannot ignore. If Śen-Kuṭṭuvan was the son of Imayavaramban, he must have been, at the lowest calculation, over fifty years of age, when he became sovereign of the Cēra Kingdom; and if we accept the statement that he ruled for fifty-five years, he must have been something more than a centenarian when he died. Nor can we construe the statement in the *patigam* to mean only that he lived for fifty-five years; for that will give to his reign not more than five years' duration! The only resolution of the tangle that suggests itself to me is to take that Śen-Kuṭṭuvan was not a son, but was a grandson of Imayavaramban. I venture to suggest that Neḍum-Cēralātan in the *Patigam* of fifth *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* means only 'the great Cēralātan', the king referred to being Kaḷankāi-kaṇṇi Nārmudic-Cēral. I do not forget the passage in *Śilappadhikāram* which describes Śen-Kuṭṭuvan as இமயத்து வானவர் மருளபலைவிற் பூட்டியவானவர் தோன்றல். Here the expression தோன்றல் need not necessarily mean son; it may denote a descendant. From the narration of Iḷankō-Aḍigaḷ's early history, where Dēvanti praises his self-sacrifice in favour of

Śen-Kuṭṭuvan, by taking holy orders[4] that the latter may become king, we can see that Śen-Kuṭṭuvan's father has only two sons, Śen-Kuṭṭuvan and Iḷankō-Aḍigaḷ, and the setting given to the incident there related completely negatives the existence of other sons. This to my mind, is significant as making it impossible that Śen-Kuṭṭuvan could be one of four sons of Imayavaramban, as is now usually believed. Two things are clear from this incident; and they are that when Śen-Kuṭṭuvan's father's reign was about to close, he had only two sons and immediately on the death of the father, one of the two sons and not the brother stood to succeed him. I propose, therefore, to regard Śen-Kuṭṭuvan as the son of Nārmuḍic-Cēral. At any rate, the construction I suggest will remove the almost insuperable difficulties we have to encounter, if we regard Śen-Kuṭṭuvan as a son of Imayavaramban, as is now usually done. If this interpretation is accepted, the duration given for Śen-Kuṭṭuvan's reign may be allowed to stand. Roughly then, Udiyan Cēral's reign may be held to have begun about 8 B.C. or practically at the beginning of the 1st century, and Śen-Kuṭṭuvan's to have terminated about 180 A.C.

In the main or Vañci line, we have seen that there are five kings after Śen-Kuṭṭuvan and in the absence of any material for ascertaining how long they reigned, we

4 *Śilap.* 30, ll. 170 seq.

may provisionally regard them as representing five generations, and thus bring the story of the kings of that line to the close of the third century of the Christian era. In the northern line, we read about ten kings; and of these, we see from *Patiṟṟup-pattu* that four kings reigned for 96 years in the aggregate. For the remaining six, even if we assign to each of them only twenty years on the average, their reigns may be taken to have occupied 120 years, so that practically we have the story of that line for over two centuries. As I have explained before, there is good reason to think that that line began in the later years of Palyānai Śelkeḻu-Kuṭṭuvan's reign, that is, some years before the close of the first century A.C.; and so, we have the story of the northern Cēras also up to the close of the third century A.C. During these three centuries, the Cēras were brought into relation with the Cōḻas and the Pāṇḍyās very often; and from the *Puṟanāṉūṟu* lyrics, we can identify most of them. The following statements give the pedigree, the probable dates and contemporaneity of the Cēras of the two branches, and the names of the Cōḻas and Pāṇḍyās, whose periods more or less synchronised with theirs. It is needless to say that the tables cannot pretend to be strictly accurate; but they are the best that can be constructed from the materials, and are tentatively offered as acceptable.

Probable Genealogy and Chronology.

CĒRAS OF VAÑCI

1. Vānavaramban.

Udiyan-Cēral. (*c.* 17 A.C.).

2. Imayavaramban. (*c.* 17—75 A.C.).
3. Palyānai Śelkeḻu Kuṭṭuvan. (*c.* 75—100 A.C.).

4. Nārmuḍic-Cēral. (*c.* 100—125 A.C.)

5. Śen-Kuṭṭuvan. (*c.* 125—180 A.C.).

6. Kuṭṭuvan-Kōdai. (*c.* 180—205 A.C.).

7. Iḷam-Kuṭṭuvan. (*c.* 205—230 A.C.).

8. Pālaipāḍiya Perum-Kaḍumkō. (*c.* 230—255 A.C.).

9. Mā-Veṇkō. (c. 255—280 A.C.).

10. Vañcan.[5] (*c.* 280—305 A.C.).

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5 Does Cēramān Vañcan simply mean the Cēramān who ruled at Vañci ? If so, the name of this Cēramān is missing.

CĒRAS OF TONDI LINE

1. Karuvūr-ēṛiya Perum-Cēral Irumpoṛai (*c.* 90—100 A.C.).

2. Antuvan-Cēral Irumpoṛai (*c.* 100—120 A.C.).

3. Āḍu-kōṭ-pāṭṭu Cēralātan (*c.* 120—158 A.C.).

4. Śelva-Kaḍumkō-Vaḻiyātan. (*c.* 158—183 A.C.).

5. Perum-Cēral Irumpoṛai (*c.* 183—200 A.C.).

6. Iḷam-Cēral Irumpoṛai (*c.* 200—216 A.C.).

7. Ātan-Avini (*c.* 216-236 A.C.).

8. Yānai-kaṭ-śey Māntaram-Cēral Irumpoṛai. (*c.* 236—266 A.C.).

9. Kō-Kōdai Mārpan. (*c.* 266—286 A.C.).

10. Kaṇaikkāl Irumpoṛai (*c.* 286—306 A.C.).

Cēras of Vañci.	Cēras of Toṇḍi.
1. Vānavaramban Udiyan-Cēral ..	...
2. Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātan..	...
3. Palyānai Śelkeḻu-Kuṭṭuvan ..	1. Karuvūrēṟiya Perum-Cēral ..
4. Nārmuḍic-Cēral ..	2. Antuvan-Cēral. 3. Āḍukōṭpāṭṭu Cēralātan ..
5. Śen-Kuṭṭuvan ..	4. Śelvak-Kaḍumkō Vāḻi-Ātan
6. Kuṭṭuvan Kōdai or Mā-Kōdai ..	5. Perum-Cēral Irumpoṟai ..
7. Iḷam-Kuṭṭuvan ..	6. Iḷam-Cēral Irumpoṟai ..
8. Pālaipāḍiya Perum-Kaḍumkō ..	7. Ātan Avini 8. Yānaikaṭśēy Māntaran-Cēral ..
9. Mā-Veṇkō ..	...
10. Vañcan ..	9. Kōdai-Mārpan ..
	10. Kaṇaikkāl Irumpoṟai ..

Cōḷas.	Pāṇḍyas.
Pōrvaikkō Peru-Naṛkiḷḷi.	..
.. ..	..
.. ..	..
Muḍittalai Kōperu-naṛkiḷḷi .. Uruvapahṛēr Iḷam-śet-Cenni ..	..
Karikāla Cōḷa .. Nalamkiḷḷi Śēt-Cenni ..	Āriyappaḍai Kaḍanta. Neḍuñjeḷiyan.
.. ..	Veṛṛivēṛ Śeḷiyan.
.. ..	Iḷavantikaippalli-tuñcia Nan-Māṛan.
.. ..	Talaiālam Kānattu Neḍuñjeḷiyan.
Rājasūyam Vēṭṭa Perunaṛkiḷḷi ..	Ugra-Peruvaḷuti.
Kuḷamuṛṛattutuñciya Kiḷḷi Vaḷavan ..	..
Śen-Kaṇṇān ..	..

CHAPTER IX.

Political, Social and Religious Background.

S. 1.

We have now pieced together the story of the earliest Cēra kings known to Tamil literature. The antiquity of the Cēra kingdom is beyond dispute. From the occurrence of *Cēra-pādaḥ* in *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka,* Mr. P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar concludes that the Cēra country had even in that long distant past come under the influence of Brahmanical or Aryan rites and rituals,[1] and he cites the authority of Prof. A. B. Keith for construing the expression as relating to the Cēras. Perhaps this is doubtful, as Sāyana takes Cēra to mean *snake.* Leaving this aside, as also the evidence of the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa,* we have in more recent times inscriptional evidence of the existence of an independent Cēra kingdom afforded by the Gīrnar inscription of Aśoka of *c.* 250 B.C. which mentions the country of Kēraḷaputra as one of the southern kingdoms. With one possible exception, Tamil literature, however, does not take us to that distant period in the history of South India, though it is clear from *Tolkāppiyam* that at the date of that ancient work the Cēra kingdom had been in existence for a long time. The exception is this.

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1 *History of the Tamils,* p. 29.

There are references to the Mōriyar in *Agaṉāṉūṟu*[2] and in those poems, the passage of their war-chariots through a mountain-pass, which possibly had been thought to be impassable, receives prominent mention. It is also clear from *Agam* 281, that the objective of the Mōriyar army was South India; and that the Vaḍukar, (literally 'northerners') a ferocious people[3] probably formed the van-guard. It has been suggested that the reference in these poems is to a Mauryan invasion.[4] If so, the alleged Mauryan advance must have occurred before Aśoka; for Aśoka tells us that the Tamil kingdoms of the South were politically free; and there is no possibility of a Mauryan invasion after his time. Tārānāth, the Tibetan historian, speaks of Bindusāra's conquests in the Dekhan and South India; and perhaps, the *Agaṉāṉūṟu* lyrics refer to one of those invasions, as I suggested many years ago.[5] Or possibly, *Mōriyar* is not the correct reading;[6] and if so, the reference would be, as suggested by me elsewhere,[7] to a southerly march into

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2 *Agam,* 69; 251; 281.

3 *Agam,* 107 and 381.

4 The latest writer on the subject, Mr. V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar takes this view in his book *"The Mauryan Polity"*, pp. 58—61. My own view is that the alleged Mauryan invasion is a myth.

5 *Date of Śilappadhikāram : Madras Christian College Magazine,* 1917.

6 Cf. *Puṟam,* 175.

7 *Kōśar and Vambà Mōriyar. Q.J.M.S.,* 1924.

India, through a north-eastern pass of the Himalyas, of a trans-Himalyan martial tribe at some remote period. However, to whatever occurrence the passages in *Aganānūṛu* may refer, they do not relate to the Cēra kingdom; and the account we have been able to gather from the Śangam works about the Cēra kingdom, does not take us earlier than the first century of the Christian era.

Let us try to get a glimpse of the political, social and religious background of the Cēra history of this period as presented by Śangam literature. It is clear that the rules of Hindu or Aryan polity mainly governed the administration. There is abundant evidence to show that the enunciation of the three-fold duties of the king given in the *Mānavadharma Śāstra*[8] was followed. The king was an indispensable institution; and his authority rested on *Dharma* of which he was the guardian.[9] Emphasis is laid on his position as a father of his people.[10] It is the duty of the king to know and remember that *he* is the source of the life of the world, and not cereals and water.[11]

Hereditary monarchy seems to have been the prevailing form of government. We read

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8 VII, 88.

9 *Puṛam*, 55. அற நெறிமுதற்றேயரசின் கொற்றம்.

10 *Ibid.*, 5. காவல் குழவிகொள் பவரினோம்பு.

11 *Ibid.*, 186. நெல்லு முயிரன்றே நீருமுயிரன்றே மன்ன னுயிர்த்தே மலர்தலை யுலகம்.

of no disputed succession or civil war in the Cēra kingdom during the period we have studied, though during this period there were instances in the Cōḷa kingdom. The King was essentially an absolute monarch, but he respected and followed the wise counsel of Ministers and other learned men. He extended equal protection and justice to all his subjects.[12] The minister was a responsible officer; and the unsympathetic and tyrannical minister who misleads the kings to oppress the people is denounced even by the royal poet Pālaipāḍiya-Perum-Kaḍuṅkō. Thus, in *Pālaik-kali,*[13] he likens the scorching sun of the sandy deserts to 'a king, who by a minister bad, unsympathetic and unjust, is led'; and in *Pālai* 9, he writes that the desolate region of the desert is

> Like a land where the ministers fleece without scruple
> And grind without mercy the people who groan
> Under crushing misrule.

The minister's position was obviously delicate, and he could not be always certain of the king's favour. Thus in *Pālai* 7, we read—

> The minister who in the sunshine basks
> Of royal favour, working still with zeal
> But for his master's good, without regard
> For his own benefit, doth sudden fall
> Under displeasure and he loses all!

12 *Puṛam,* 17 and 55.
13 See *Pālai,* 7.

From the occurrence of the expressions ஐம்பெருங்குழு and எண் பேராயம் in some ancient works like *Śilappadhikāram, Maṇimēkalai* and *Perum-kadai,* some scholars have committed themselves to the view that in the Śangam period government was conducted with the aid of popular assemblies and representative councils. This is an entirely fanciful view. A reference to *Divākaram* for the meaning of these terms would conclusively show that these groups connoted well-known adjuncts to royalty or royal paraphernalia.[14] They comprised ministers, *purohits,* army captains, embassage, spies, astrologers, near relations, citizens, and various denominations of soldiers. The ideal king was a benevolent autocrat, and the people were devoted to him, under whose protection they were able to follow their pursuits in peace. Ancient Tamil literature does not seem to record any instance of resistance to the will of the king by his subjects; and in those ancient days, the fundamental value and importance of peace between the ruler and his people was also prominently recognized. Thus we read in the *Kuṛaḷ:*

> "Blest though the land in all things else, it naught avails
> If there's no peace between the people and the King."
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> —*Kuṛaḷ,* 740.

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14 Vide also *Maṇi.* p. 10 foot-note.

S. 2.

The effective protection of his peọple is stressed in Śangam literature as the essential function of the king. Whether for the satisfactory discharge of that essential function or from motives of personal ambition, or from sheer irresistible blood-lust, kings often indulged in war, and not infrequently in such excess that learned men seeking their bounty felt compelled to remind them that peace had its victories no less renowned than war.[15] Almost every great king of the Śangam period appears to have been a great warrior, and the Cēra monarchs were no exception. Necessarily, they maintained armies of well-equipped soldiers, who wore defensive armours (மெய்ம்மறை) and were armed with bows and arrows, spears and swords, and used shields made of tough bull-hide.[16] Before starting for war, elaborate sacrifice to *Koṟṟavai*,[17] the Dravidian *Durgā*, and the presiding deity of the war-drum was made.[18] The kings themselves often led their armies in person in the field of battle; and the first act of provocation by an invading army seems to have been the felling of the *Kāval-maram* or totem tree of the enemy from the encircling woods.[19] The lifting of the enemy's

15 Cf. *Puṟam*, 5.
16 *Patiṟṟup-pattu*, 45.
17 Literally '*The Goddess of Victory*'.
18 *Patiṟṟup-pattu*, 30; *Patigam* III.
19 *Puṟam*, 36.

cattle was also a prelude to war.[20] The forts were well guarded and the gates secured with bolts of tough wood;[21] and the fortifications were surrounded by moats filled with water.[22] On the field, the kings used war-chariots; and besides foot-soldiers, they employed horses and elephants in war.[23] Appalling slaughter, and utter devastation and destruction by fire followed in the wake of war,[24] and frequently personal humiliation, often brutally vindictive, were inflicted on the vanquished foe and even on his women-folk.[25] Indeed, showing clemency to a vanquished enemy evoked surprise and wonder.[26] The souls of heroes slain in battle were believed to attain *Vīra svarga,* which corresponds to the Valhalla of Gothic mythology; and so firmly was this notion rooted that among the warrior clan, a still-born child was cleft in twain at birth that it might attain 'the heroes' heaven'.[27] The hero could not bear to receive a wound on the back in the field of battle; and he atoned for the disgrace by self-immolation by starvation on the scene.[28]

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20 *Agam,* 372.
21 *Puṛam,* 20.
22 *Ibid.,* 14 and 37.
23 *Ibid.,* 14.
24 *Patiṛṛup-pattu,* 25, 26, 43 and 48.
25 *Ibid.,* V *Patigam.*
26 *Patiṛṛup-pattu,* 32.
27 *Puṛam,* 74.
28 *Ibid.,* 65.

It is interesting to note that in those days, the martial spirit animated not only the men, but also the women of the land. At a time of war, the women-folk urged their male relations to march to battle, resolved to win or die like heroes. The wife rejoiced to see her husband display his valour, and the mother was proud of her son who showed his bravery; and neither was troubled by the thought of any possible danger to the life of her hero. They regarded a dastard in war with contempt. *Puṟam* 278, given below, depicts vividly this significant trait in the character of the ancient Tamil dame.

The dame of ancient age, with shrunken veins,
And loosely hanging tissues, heard her son
Had from the battle turned in fear and fled.
In towering rage she vowed, if that be so,
She would for very shame cut off her breasts
That gave the despicable coward suck.
She snatched a sword, swept with impetuous speed
Into the gory battle-field, and searched
The heaps of warriors slain, when lo! she found
Stretched on the field of glory, cut in twain,
Her valiant son. Then swelled, indeed, with pride
The mother's heart, which was with gladness filled,
Intenser far than when she gave him birth! [28a]

Puṟap-poruḷ-Veṇbā-Mālai, the author of which is a Cēra, gives the grammar of warfare as understood in ancient Tamil India; and we see from it that the approved rule was that the invading army should not molest the enemy's cattle, which before the battle began, should be

28a Cf. *Puṟam,* 277; 279; 295; 86.

removed to a place of safety. The rules also enjoined that the invading army should—

Spare the temples where sacrifices are offered;
Spare the consecrated dwellings of the ascetics;
Spare the residence of the holy Vēdic Brahmanas.

It is seen that the vanquished king was sometimes kept in confinement as a prisoner by the victor, possibly in expectation of suitable ransom.[29]

S. 3.

Watered by perennial streams, the Cēra country was very fertile, and its prosperity was maintained by the Cēra kings. A large proportion of the population pursued agriculture; but other occupations, such as fishing and hunting were also followed. Arts, trade and commerce were also pursued. The Cēra Kings, as Kuṛumkōḷiyūr-Kiḷār, writes in *Puṛam* 17—

Their royal sceptre even held
O'er all their subjects, where-so-e'er they lived,
In hill or mountain, forest or in town;
Protecting them with equal justice, they
Chastised all wrong, and as their due, received
The share of yield from land by law allowed.

This share is explained by the commentator to be one-sixth, the *Ṣaḍbhāga* of the Dharmaśāstra and the Arthaśāstra. Among the industries pursued in the country, were spinning

29 *Puṛam,* 74 and 17.

and weaving. Spinning cotton was an occupation of women;[30] who also prepared beaten rice(அவல்) with wooden pestles (உலக்கை).[31] Besides cotton cloth, also silk was woven,[32] and they were of superior quality. Files, axes and other iron implements and metal-lamps supported by metal-stand were produced,[33] and jewellery in gold, silver and precious stones were made.[34] Carpentry and work in hides also flourished. We have definite mention that hides were fashioned into shields for the use of soldiers in battles,[35] cut into thongs and circlets for use in Yāgas[36] and into straps which were 'stitched with ease and dexterity for cots' by cobblers.[37] Salt was manufactured in salt-pans and carried in carts for sale.[38] There was also extensive trade in fish[39] in which fish-women took an active part. The land grew spices, especially pepper, which was much sought after in the western world,[40] and it abounded in

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30 *Puṟam,* 125.

31 *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* 29.

32 *Ibid.,* 12.

33 *Puṟam* 36; and *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* 47 and 52.

34 *Puṟam* 66; *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* 16.

35 *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* 45.

36 *Ibid.,* 74.

37 *Puṟam,* 82.

38 *Neytal,* 21; *Naṟ.* 4; *Agam,* 119; 310; and *Kuṟun.,* 165.

39 *Puṟam,* 343.

40 *Agam.,* 149.

cocoanut palms,[41] sandal-wood, *Agil* and sugarcane.[42] Its elephants gave ivory; its mines yielded precious stones and its seas yielded pearls.[43] The country was beyond doubt very flourishing and wealthy.

S. 4.

Ship-building industry does not appear to be mentioned in Śangam works; but the people of the Cēra country were familiar with navigation of the high seas[44] and from early times they had trade relations with foreign nations. We have evidence that in the very dim past, the rare products of Malabar found their way to Babylon and Egypt, and later the Phoenicians controlled the spice trade of Malabar. Chinese junks were also attracted to the ports of the Cēra country, with which it seems obvious the trade relations of the Chinese, which probably began long before the ships of Greece and Rome called at the Cēra ports, must have continued for a long time; and from the architecture of the buildings on the Malabar coast, which reproduces the distinctive features of the architecture of Mongolian countries, particularly in its temples, one may conclude that a Chinese colony had been established, where, as generally happened with people living

41 *Puṛam,* 17.
42 *Patiṛṛup-pattu,* 87.
43 *Ibid.,* 67.
44 *Pālai,* 4; *Maṇi,* IV, ll. 29—34.

in an alien land, the Chinese settlers lived in houses built in the style of their native country. To my mind the Mongolian curves and the upturned eaves and gables that we see in Travancore houses and temples supply strong evidence of Chinese influence which must have sprung from Chinese trade relationship with the Cēra country.

With the discovery of Hippalus about the beginning of the first century of the Christian era, that, by taking advantage of the monsoon winds, ships could sail straight from the Red Sea and reach India in 40 days, a new era in the commercial activity of the Cēra kingdom was inaugurated. The direction of the wind led the ships straight to Musiri which Pliny described as the nearest mart in India. The *Patiṟṟup-pattu* and *Puṟanāṉūṟu* poems bear eloquent testimony to the commercial activity of Musiri and other ports of the Cēra kingdom; and we are told that in exchange for gold that foreign vessels brought, they took home pepper and other valuable products from those ports. To what extent trade in pepper and other products was carried on with Rome will appear from the words of Pliny who says: 'In no year does India drain us of less than 550,000,000 sesterces, giving back her own wares which are sold among us at fully 100 times their first cost.' Large quantities of Roman gold and silver came into the Cēra kingdom, as the result of export of pepper to Rome, and thousands of Roman

coins, mostly of the reigns of Augustus, Tiberius, Gaius and Claudius, have been discovered on the Malabar coast, and in the districts of Madura and Coimbatore.[45] The trade at the Cēra ports was so extensive, that warehouses had to be erected.[46] We notice from Pliny that in his days (*c.* 50 A.C.) a safer and more convenient port than Musiri was Barake, to which pepper was brought down the river in dugouts or boats scooped out of a single tree from Kottanāra (Kuṭṭa-nāḍu). Barake has now been rightly identified with Porakad, south of Alleppey.[47] By the time of the *Periplus,* however, Musiri, modern Cranganore, had become the gate of India, and the foremost port for foreign trade.

Indeed, in the days of the *Periplus,* it was a very busy port. The author of the *Periplus* says that from this port were purchased pepper, pearls, ivory, silk, spikenard, malabathram (Skt. Tamālapatra), transparent stones like beryl, diamonds and rubies, and tortise shell; and according to Mr. Schoff, the latest translator of the *Periplus,* pepper supplied, perhaps, three-fourth of the total bulk

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45 See Warmington "*Commerce between Rome and India*", Chap. 7.

46 *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* 55.

47 The credit of this identification belongs to Mr. I. C. Chakko, a former Director of Industries, Travancore. Is Nilcynda the present Nīndakara, just north of Quilon?

of the average west-bound cargo. Pliny's language is almost furious when he writes of the import of pepper into Rome. He says: "It is quite surprising that the use of pepper has come so much into fashion, seeing that it is sometimes by their substance and sometimes by their appearance that articles attract our notice; whereas pepper has nothing in it that can plead as a recommendation to either fruit or berry, its only desirable quality being a certain pungency; and yet it is for this that we import it all the way from India! Who was the first to make a trial of it as an article of food? And who, I wonder, was the man that was not content to prepare himself by hunger only for the satisfying of a greedy appetite?" In spite of such strictures, the Roman import trade in pepper grew; and we are told that when Alaric the Visigoth laid seige to Rome, among the terms he offered for raising the seige was the immediate payment of 3,000 lbs. of pepper. It is clear from the accounts that there was flourishing foreign trade on an international scale at the port of Musiri. Besides pepper, pearl was another important export from South India; and about the craze for pearls in Rome, Pliny writes: "Our ladies glory in having pearls suspended from their fingers, two or three of them dangling from their ears, delighted even with the rattling of the pearls as they knock against each other; and now, at the present time, the poor classes are

even affecting them. They put them on their feet, and that, not only on the laces of their sandals, but all over the shoes." He mentions Lollia Paulina, the wife of the Emperor Caius, who was seen on an ordinary betrothal wearing pearls to the value of 40,000,000 sesterces or roughly £333,000!

There is thus remarkable concurrence of testimony, as already stated, between the Śangam works and the *Periplus* on the commercial activity of the ports of the Cēra country; and at these sea-ports there were warehouses maintained for storing foreign merchandise.[48] It is interesting to note that the valuable products of the country were sold to foreign merchants for gold;[49] while apparently paddy was adopted as the usual measure of value for internal trade. Thus in *Puṟam* 343, we learn that fish was bartered for paddy. There were recognized measures for measuring paddy (நெல்லின் அம்பணை அளவை[50]) and tribute paid in paddy, we read, was measured into the state granaries.[51] Apparently, metallic currency alone was employed in foreign trade.

S. 5.

The Tamils appear to have been a brave, warm-hearted and warm-blooded people who

48 *Patiṟṟup-pattu*, 55; 67 and 74.
49 *Agam*, 149 and *Puṟam*, 343.
50 *Patiṟṟup-pattu*, 66 and 71.
51 *Ibid.*, 66.

cared much for the mere joys of living. They cultivated poetry, music and dancing. Their staple food was rice; but fish and meat were also used. They had almost a partiality for palm-wine. One might say that, perhaps, wine and women, war and song, largely claimed the attention of at least the leisured classes in those early days. The Cēra kings liberally patronized poetry and song, and were easily accessible to poets and singers. These came from both sexes and from all castes and classes; and they were all very munificently rewarded without distinction of caste, creed or sex. The author of the '*History of the Tamils*' cynically observes:—" Besides protecting his subjects, the only other function of Rajas was to be surrounded by beggar bards, who eulogized them in their poems and were plied with food and drink as reward." [52] There seems to be some warrant for the last statement, afforded by *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* 43, lines 34 and 35, which run as follows:—

நிறைந்து நெடிதிரார்த்த சும்பின் வயிரியர்
உண்டெனத் தவா அக் கள்ளு ;

but there is ample evidence that the bards were also more substantially rewarded. The variety of *Yāḻs* mentioned in Śangam literature, and the institution of *pāṇar* indisputably show that the times and conditions were specially favourable for the art of music to flourish.

52 Page 191.

Minstrelsy was much patronized not only in courts but also in urban life; and we read of special adaptations of musical instruments for entertainment in rural areas. Śangam poetry is full of life and colour, and affords a faithful mirror of ancient Tamil Society. It may be noted that several Cēra kings and other members of the Cēra royal family occupy an honoured place among the Śangam poets.

Adult marriage was the normal rule among the ancient Tamils. From *Tolkāppiyam* it is seen that the approved form of marital union was of the nature of what is known amongst Sanskrit law-givers as the *gāndharva* form of marriage. It consisted in voluntary union in secrecy from reciprocal desire; and Tamil usage required no religious rite to give it validity. *Tolkāppiyam* explains that in course of time the sanctity of *Kaḷavu* or secret union was violated by deceitfulness and treachery; and so Aryans or learned men—*Aiyar* is the term employed and it is either a corruption of *Āryar* or is a derivative from ஐ, meaning வியப்பு (Tolkappiyam) and denotes 'men who evoke admiration'—enjoined the rule of *Kaṛpu* or open marriage, following the usage of the higher classes (Mēn-makkaḷ), [53] and thus publicity, which distinguishes a recognized marriage from an illicit connection or concubinage, was secured to the union. *Kaṛpu*

53 *Tol: kaṛpiyal,* 3 and 4.

consisted in the bride being given away in marriage by her parents or other relations; and it was usually a convention that concluded the relation that had begun and had continued for some time in the Kaḷavu form. It is interesting to note that the approved forms of marriage according to the Sanskrit Smṛtis were regarded by the Tamils as inappropriate or unapproved marital unions—*Poruntā-k-kāmam.* Sometimes the bride-groom was chosen by a trial of strength in bull fight (*mullai* 9) and occasionally bride-price was paid.[54] When the choice of a husband by the parents happened to be different from a woman's own choice, she over-reached them by eloping with her lover,[55] a procedure which custom recognized. An unsuccessful wooer often succeeded in getting his sweet-heart to marry him, by having recourse to *maḍal-ēṛal,* which consisted in his wearing a wreath of *senna* (*avirai*) and *madar* flowers and going about in a vehicle of palmyra fronds, beseeching public sympathy and help.[56]

There was no rule against polygamy; and concubinage seems to have been prevalent,

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54 *Naṛ.*, 300.

55 *Pālai,* 8 and *Agam,* 153.

56 *Neytal,* 21, 22, 24 and *Kuṛaḷ,* 1,133; 1,135. Vide my '*Glimpses into the Married Life of the Ancient Tamil People*', XXII, *Q.J.M.S.*, For a description of *Maḍal-ēṛal* see Dikshitar's *Studies in Tamil Literature and History,* pp. 275-6 and my translation of Neytal 22 in the article cited (XXII, *Q.J.M.S.*).

especially in urban areas, *Maruta-nilam,* where a life of ease and luxury, wealth and pleasure was possible. The frequent mention in *Agam* literature of hetaerae and their influence shows that they formed a recognized institution, in early Tamil society; and we read that they used also to throng at festivals, where acting and dancing prevailed.[57] The danseuse not infrequently acted as a procuress.[58] The following extract from *Marutak-kali* voices the piteous complaint of a faithful wife addressed to her husband guilty of marital disloyalty.

> Hard-hearted, long hast thou forsaken me!
> My beauty's wasted; and my eyes have known
> No sleep! And if unable to sit up,
> I seek my couch at times to close my eyes,
> The sounding drums that do announce each day
> Thy visit to thy artful courtezans,
> Who fragrant garlands wear, prevent my rest!
> Thou hast neglected me! my weeping eyes,
> Deprived of sleep so long, seek transient rest,
> Comforted by my darling's son's caress;
> The merry song thy youthful mistresses
> Sing as they dance in jollity in homes
> Thou hast provided, drives such rest away!
>
> —*Marutam,* 5.

Though there is overwhelming evidence in Śangam literature of the husband's infidelity to his wife, the ancient Tamil wife apparently never swerved from loyalty to her husband even in very trying circumstances. The following

57 *Agam,* 326 and 222.
58 *Nar.,* 310.

poem from *Pālaikkali* is illustrative of the typical Tamil wife of those days.

Thou tellest me the desert is so parched
For utter want of rain that the wild deer
On prickly cactus plant is forced to feed;
And, by the shafts of heartless robbers pierced,
Wayfarers in that arid region lie
Writhing with thirst which they attempt to slake
With tears that trickle to their dried-up tongues!
My lord and husband! Thou dost not, perhaps,
My nature comprehend. It is not meet
Thou shouldst our bond thus disregard and go!
To go with thee and in thy journey share
With thee the perils of the desert track,
Know that alone can give me happiness!

—*Pālai,* 5.

When the husband left on a long journey, the wife kept count of the number of days he was away by making marks on a wall,[59] a method of keeping count of days then common[60] as it is even now in some villages.

Women were very fond of jewels, and this trait was so pronounced in their nature, that even in Śangam literature they came to be referred to, by metonomy as சேயிழை [61] and நேரிழை [62] Besides ordinary jewels like bangles, anklets, belts, rings, etc., there was in use a jewel fashioned like or made of tiger's teeth which

59 *Agam,* 351.
60 *Agam,* 61 and 289.
61 *Puṛam,* 3 and *Patiṛṛpu-pattu,* 65 and 88.
62 *Neytal,* 22.

ladies wore along with the *tāli.*[63] Music and dance were cultivated; and there were professional minstrels called *pāṇar* and *viṛali* and dancers. In *Marutam* 14, we read of 'the circlet which accomplished dancers wear on their fair forehead, when they appear upon the stage'. Among musical instruments frequent mention is made of the shepherd's reed[64] and the seven stringed *Yāḻ,*[65] which from its synonym கலப்பை [66] may, perhaps, be thought to have been shaped like a plough. Collyrium was used by women; and men smeared themselves with sandal-paste and wore garlands of flowers and strings of pearls.

S. 6.

Fasts and ceremonial baths were common.[67] It is clear that belief in omens and astrology was general. For example, Kākkai-pāḍiniyār Naccellaiyār writes in *Kuṛuntokai* 210 that the cawing of the crow presages the arrival of a guest,[68] a belief that exists even now in Tamil villages. It is due to this circumstance that the term Kākkai-pāḍiniyār is prefixed to her name.

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63 புலிப்பற் கோத்த புலம்பு மணித்தாலி *Agam,* 7. Even now tiger-claws cased in gold are used as jewel for children.

64 Cf. *Neytal,* 13 and 14.

65 Cf. *Pālai,* 8.

66 Cf. *Puṛam,* 206. (Commentator's note).

67 *Patiṛṛup-pattu,* 31, l. 6.

68 விருந்து வரக் கரைந்த காக்கை.

The throbbing of a woman's left eye-lid or her left shoulder or arm, was believed to betoken the happening of something good to her; while in the case of a man that significance was conveyed by the throbbing of his right eye-lid, arm or shoulder,[69] a belief that persists to this day. The 'click-click' of the wall-lizard prognosticated good or evil according to the direction from which it proceeded,[70] and even today that belief persists among country folk. We see from *Aganānūṟu,* that omens used to be consulted before going to battle. Knowledge of planetary astronomy and astrology existed among the Tamils in those early days;[71] and lunar asterisms and months of the year were also known.[72] The appearance of a comet or the falling of a meteor, it was believed, indicated the approaching death of a king.[73]

Among the mythological stories then current, we may mention Tripura-Samhāra by Śiva,[74] Śūrapadma-Samhāra by Subrahmaṇya[75] and the Kṛṣṇa legends.[76] Kṛttikā-dīpam or

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69 *Pālai,* 10.

70 *Pālai,* 10; *Agam,* 9; 151, 289, 351 and Naṟ.. 246 and 333.

71 *Paripāḍal,* XI; *Śilap.,* and *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* 24.

72 *Puṟam,* 229; *Agam,* 137 and 141.

73 *Puṟam,* 229.

74 *Pālaik-kali,* V and *Puṟam,* 55.

75 *Patiṟṟup-pattu,* 12.

76 *Śilappadhikāram* refers to boyish sports and dances of Kṛṣṇa.

illumination on Tiru-Kārttigai day was common even in those early days;[77] and we read of a *Panguni* festival (Agam 137).[78]

With much that belonged to non-Aryan practices and primitive culture, Aryan rites and culture had also widely spread over the land. Worship of departed heroes was common. *Puṛanānūṛu* and *Aganānūṛu* contain several poems, from which we see that dolmens or rather stones were set up for the departed, whose weapons were placed leaning on the stones. These stones were decorated with red flowers and peacock feathers, and the name of the deceased hero was inscribed on them; and intoxicating liquor and worship were offered to them.[79] Malignant demons were propitiated with sacrifice.[80] *Koṛṛavai*, was worshipped with elaborate sacrifices, especially before going to war. The dead were cremated,[81] though burial also seems to have been practised.[82] There is abundant proof that Vēdic religion had spread over the land, and Vēdic rites and rituals prevailed.[83] Among

77 *Naṛ.*, 202.

78 *Pungunni-Utsavam*, which falls in March-April, is the most important festival in Śri Padmanabha Svāmi temple at Trivandrum as also in temples of Tamil districts.

79 *Puṛam*, 232, 263, 264 and 329.

80 *Patiṛṛup-pattu*, 71.

81 *Puṛam*, 245 and 246.

82 *Patiṛṛup-pattu*, 44.

83 *Ibid.*, III, and VII.

the deities that were worshipped were Śiva, Viṣṇu, Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and Muruga or Skanda. Brahmanas performed their Vēdic rites[84] and pursued their six-fold duties. They discharged the onerous duty of expounding *Dharma* to the kings, and they were chosen as king's ministers. In speaking of Palyānai Śelkeḻu-Kuṭṭuvan, Pālai Kaudamanār writes in *Patiṟṟup-pattu*, III:

ஓதல் வேட்டலவை பிறர்ச் செய்த
லீதல் ஏற்றல் என்றாறு புரிந்தொழுகும்
அறம் புரி அந்தணர் வழிமொழிந்தொழுகி
ஞாலம் நின் வழி யொழுகப் பாடல் சான்று
நாடுடன் விளங்கு நாடா.

Patiṟṟup-pattu, 24.

As preceptors of *Dharma*, they were held in respect by kings. In *Patiṟṟup-pattu*, VII, Kapilar in his praise of Śelvak-kaḍumkō Vāḻi Ātan writes: பார்ப்பார்க் கல்லது பணிபறி யலையே. From the testimony of Śangam literature, it is clear that Vēdic rites were not infrequently performed even by kings, and Brahmanas were liberally helped to perform *Yāgas*. Gifts of cows and land were freely bestowed on them. We also read of Brahmana ascetics[85] and one Cēra king, as we saw, became, after a life of military glory, an ascetic like his Brahmana preceptor. Though Brahmanism was predominant in the land, Buddhism and Jainism also prevailed among the people, and the adherents

84 *Neytal*, 2 and 13.
85 *Pālai*, 8.

of all the three religions lived in the country in perfect friendliness.[86]

Such is the political, social and religious background that Śangam literature presents in regard to the Cēra kingdom, which, richly endowed as it was by nature, was ruled over by sympathetic monarchs, who besides being great warriors, were also liberal patrons of learning and art, and made the welfare of the people their dominant concern. The Cēra Kingdom still flourishes like the bay tree; for it is gratifying to note that, though of the three Tamil kingdoms celebrated in Śangam literature, the Pāṇḍya and Cōḷa kingdoms have long ago ceased to exist, there still thrives under the rule of its own kings the Cēra kingdom,—

> "Bright breadth of plain, blue-veined by many a stream,
> Umbrageous hills, sweet glades, and forest fair."

86 This is evident from a study of *Śilappadhikāram.*

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